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EDWARD YOUNG, D.D.

# NIGHT THOUGHTS,

AND A

## Paraphrase

ON PART OF

## THE BOOK OF JOB.

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BY

EDWARD YOUNG, D.D.

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WITH

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

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1812.





THE  
LIFE  
OF  
*DR. YOUNG,*

BY THE  
REV. SIR HERBERT CROFT AND DR. JOHNSON.

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THE following life was written, at my request, by a gentleman who had better information than I could easily have obtained; and the Public will perhaps wish that I had solicited and obtained more such favours from him\*.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ In consequence of our different conversations about authentic materials for the *Life of Young*, I send you the following detail.

“ Of great men, something must always be said to gratify curiosity. Of the illustrious author of the ‘ *Night Thoughts*’ much has been told of which there never could have been proofs; and little care appears to have been taken to tell that, of which proofs, with little trouble, might have been procured.”

\* See *Gent. Mag.* Vol. LXX. p. 225.

“ EDWARD YOUNG was born at Upham near Winchester, in June 1681. He was the son of Edward Young, at that time fellow of Winchester College and rector of Upham; who was the son of Jo. Young of Woodhay in Berkshire, styled by Wood, *gentleman*. In September, 1682, the Poet's father was collated to the prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the church of Sarum, by bishop Ward. When Ward's faculties were impaired through age, his duties were necessarily performed by others. We learn from Wood, that, at a visitation of Sprat's, July the 12th, 1686, the prebendary preached a Latin sermon, afterwards published, with which the bishop was so pleased, that he told the Chapter he was concerned to find the preacher had one of the worst prebends in their church. Some time after this, in consequence of his merit and reputation, or of the interest of lord Bradford, to whom, in 1702, he dedicated two volumes of sermons, he was appointed chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and preferred to the deanery of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, says, ‘ he was chaplain and clerk of the closet to the late Queen, who honoured him by standing godmother to the Poet.’ His fellowship of Winchester he resigned in favour of a gentleman of the name of Harris, who married his only daughter. The Dean died at Sarum, after a short illness, in 1705, in the sixty-third year of his age. On the Sunday after his decease bishop Burnet preached at the cathedral, and began his sermon with saying, ‘ Death has been

of late walking round us, and making breach upon breach upon us, and has now carried away the head of this body with a stroke; so that he, whom you saw a week ago distributing the holy mysteries, is now laid in the dust. But he still lives in the many excellent directions he has left us, both how to live and how to die.'

"The Dean placed his son upon the foundation at Winchester College, where he had himself been educated. At this school Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birthday, the period at which those upon the foundation are superannuated. Whether he did not betray his abilities early in life, or his masters had not skill enough to discover in their pupil any marks of genius for which he merited reward, or no vacancy at Oxford offered them an opportunity to bestow upon him the reward provided for merit by William of Wykeham; certain it is, that to an Oxford fellowship our Poet did not succeed. By chance, or by choice, New College cannot claim the honour of numbering among its fellows him who wrote the 'Night Thoughts.'

"On the 13th of October, 1703, he was entered an independent member of New College, that he might live at little expense in the Warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father's, till he should be qualified to stand for a fellowship at All Souls. In a few months the Warden of New College died. He then removed to Corpus College. The president of this society, from regard also for his father, invited him thither, in

order to lessen his academical expenses. In 1708, he was nominated to a law-fellowship at All Souls by archbishop Tenison, into whose hands it came by devolution. Such repeated patronage, while it justifies Burnet's praise of the father, reflects credit on the conduct of the son. The manner in which it was exerted seems to prove, that the father did not leave behind him much wealth.

“ On the 23d of April, 1714, Young took his degree of bachelor of civil laws, and his doctor's degree on the 10th of June, 1719.

“ Soon after he went to Oxford, he discovered, it is said, an inclination for pupils. Whether he ever commenced tutor is not known. None has hitherto boasted to have received his academical instruction from the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts.’

“ It is probable that his College was proud of him no less as a scholar than as a poet; for in 1716, when the foundation of the Codrington Library was laid, two years after he had taken his bachelor's degree, Young was appointed to speak the Latin oration. This is at least particular for being dedicated in English ‘ To the Ladies of the Codrington Family.’ To these ladies he says, ‘ that he was unavoidably flung into a singularity, by being obliged to write an epistle dedicatory void of common-place, and such a one was never published before by any author whatever; that this practice absolved them from any obligation of reading what was presented to

them; and that the bookseller approved of it, because it would make people stare, was absurd enough, and perfectly right.'

"Of this Oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works; and prefixed to an edition by Curll and Tonson, 1741, is a letter from Young to Curll, if we may credit Curll, dated December the 9th, 1739, wherein he says, that he has not leisure to review what he formerly wrote, and adds, "I have not the 'Epistle to Lord Lansdowne.' If you will take my advice, I would have you omit that, and the Oration on Codrington. I think the collection will sell better without them."

"There are who relate, that, when first Young found himself independent, and his own master at All Souls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became.

"The authority of his father, indeed, had ceased, some time before, by his death; and Young was certainly not ashamed to be patronized by the infamous Wharton. But Wharton befriended in Young, perhaps, the poet, and particularly the tragedian. If virtuous authors must be patronized only by virtuous peers, who shall point them out?

"Yet Pope is said by Ruffhead to have told Warburton, that 'Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass a *foolish youth*, the sport of peers and poets; but

his having a very good heart enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterwards with honour.'

" They who think ill of Young's morality in the early part of his life, may perhaps be wrong; but Tindal could not err in his opinion of Young's warmth and ability in the cause of religion. Tindal used to spend much of his time at All Souls. 'The other boys,' said the Atheist, 'I can always answer, because I always know whence they have their arguments, which I have read a hundred times; but that fellow Young is continually pestering me with something of his own\*.'

" After all, Tindal and the censures of Young may be reconcilable. Young might, for two or three years, have tried that kind of life, in which his natural principles would not suffer him to wallow long. If this were so, he has left behind him not only his evidence in favour of virtue, but the potent testimony of experience against vice.

" We shall soon see that one of his earliest productions was more serious than what comes from the generality of unfledged poets.

" Young perhaps ascribed the good fortune of Addison to the 'Poem to his Majesty,' presented, with a copy of verses, to Somers; and hoped that he also might soar to wealth and honours on wings

\* Every time I called upon Johnson during the time I was employed in collecting materials for this life, he never suffered me to depart without some such farewell as this: "Don't forget that rascal Tindal, Sir. Be sure to hang up the Atheist." Alluding to this anecdote, which Johnson had mentioned.



of the same kind. His first poetical flight was when Queen Anne called up to the House of Lords the sons of the earls of Northampton and Aylesbury, and added, in one day, ten others to the number of peers. In order to reconcile the people to one, at least, of the new lords, he published, in 1712, 'An Epistle to the Right Hon. George Lord Lansdowne.' In this composition the Poet pours out his panegyric with the extravagance of a young man, who thinks his present stock of wealth will never be exhausted.

"The poem seems intended also to reconcile the public to the late peace. This is endeavoured to be done by showing that men are slain in war, and that in peace 'harvests wave, and Commerce swells her sail.' If this be humanity, for which he meant it, is it politics? Another purpose of this epistle appears to have been, to prepare the public for the reception of some tragedy he might have in hand. His lordship's patronage, he says, will not let him 'repent his passion for the stage;' and the particular praise bestowed on 'Othello' and 'Oroonoko' looks as if some such character as Zanga was even then in contemplation. The affectionate mention of the death of his friend Harrison of New College, at the close of this poem, is an instance of Young's art, which displayed itself so wonderfully some time afterwards in the 'Night Thoughts,' of making the public a party in his private sorrow.

"Should justice call upon you to censure this poem, it ought at least to be remembered that he

did not insert it in his works; and that in the letter to Curll, as we have seen, he advises its omission. The booksellers, in the late body of English Poetry, should have distinguished what was deliberately rejected by the respective authors\*. This I shall be careful to do with regard to Young. ‘I think,’ says he, ‘the following pieces in *four* volumes to be the most excusable of all that I have written; and I wish *less apology* was needful for these. As there is no recalling what is got abroad, the pieces here republished I have revised and corrected, and rendered them as *pardonable* as it was in my power to do.’

“ Shall the gates of repentance be shut only against literary sinners?

“ When Addison published ‘Cato’ in 1713, Young had the honour of prefixing to it a commendatory copy of verses. This is one of the pieces which the author of the ‘Night Thoughts’ did not republish.

“ On the appearance of his ‘Poem on the Last Day,’ Addison did not return Young’s compliment; but ‘The Englishman’ of October 29, 1713, which was probably written by Addison, speaks handsomely of this poem. The ‘Last Day’ was published soon after the peace. The vice-chancellor’s *imprimatur*, for it was printed at Oxford, is dated May the 19th, 1713. From the exordium Young appears to have spent some time on the composition of it. While other bards ‘with Britain’s hero set their souls on fire,’ he draws,

\* Dr. Johnson, in many cases, thought and directed differently.

he says, a deeper scene. Marlborough *had been* considered by Britain as her *hero*; but, when the ‘*Last Day*’ was published, female cabal had blasted for a time the laurels of Blenheim. This serious poem was finished by Young as early as 1710, before he was thirty; for part of it is printed in the ‘*Guardian*.’ It was inscribed to the Queen, in a dedication, which, for some reason, he did not admit into his works. It tells her, that ‘his only title to the great honour he now does himself, is the obligation which he formerly received from her royal indulgence.’

“Of this obligation nothing is now known, unless he alluded to her being his godmother. He is said, indeed, to have been engaged at a settled stipend as a writer for the Court. In Swift’s ‘*Rhapsody on Poetry*’ are these lines, speaking of the Court——

Whence Gay was banish’d in disgrace,  
Where Pope will never show his face,  
Where Y—— must torture his invention  
To flatter knaves, or lose his pension.

“That Y—— means Young seems clear from four other lines in the same poem:

Attend, ye Popes and Youngs and Gays,  
And tune your harps and strew your bays;  
Your panegyrics here provide;  
You cannot err on flattery’s side.

“Yet who shall say with certainty, that Young was a pensioner? In all modern periods of this country, have not the writers, on one side been

regularly called Hirelings, and on the other Patriots?

“ Of the **Dedication** the complexion is clearly political. It speaks in the highest terms of the late peace; it gives her Majesty praise indeed for her victories, but says, that the author is more pleased to see her rise from this lower world, soaring above the clouds; passing the first and second heavens, and leaving the fixed stars behind her; nor will he lose her there, he says, but keep her still in view through the boundless spaces on the other side of Creation, in her journey towards eternal bliss, till he behold the Heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her still onward from the stretch of his imagination, which tires in her pursuit, and falls back again to earth.

“ The Queen was soon called away from this lower world, to a place where human praise or human flattery, even less general than this, are of little consequence. If Young thought the dedication contained only the praise of truth, he should not have omitted it in his works. Was he conscious of the exaggeration of party? Then he should not have written it. The poem itself is not without a glance towards politics, notwithstanding the subject. The cry that the Church was in danger, had not yet subsided. The ‘**Last Day**,’ written by a layman, was much approved by the ministry, and their friends.

“ Before the Queen’s death, ‘**The Force of Religion, or Vanquished Love**,’ was sent into the world. This poem is founded on the execution

of lady Jane Grey and her husband lord Guildford, 1554, a story chosen for the subject of a tragedy by Edmund Smith, and wrought into a tragedy by Rowe. The dedication of it to the countess of Salisbury does not appear in his own edition. He hopes it may be some excuse for his presumption, that the story could not have been read without thoughts of the countess of Salisbury, though it had been dedicated to another. ‘To behold,’ he proceeds, ‘a person *only* virtuous, stirs in us a prudent regret; to behold a person *only* amiable to the sight, warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn our eyes to a countess of Salisbury, gives us pleasure and improvement; it works a sort of miracle, occasions the bias of our nature to fall off from sin, and makes our very senses and affections converts to our religion, and promoters of our duty.’ His flattery was as ready for the other sex as for ours, and was at least as well adapted.

“August the 27th, 1714, Pope writes to his friend Jervais, that he is just arrived from Oxford; that every one is much concerned for the Queen’s death, but that no panegyrics are ready yet for the King.

“Nothing like friendship has yet taken place between Pope and Young: for, soon after the event which Pope mentions, Young published a poem on the Queen’s death, and his Majesty’s accession to the throne. It is inscribed to Addison, then secretary to the Lords Justices. Whatever were the obligations which he had formerly

received from Anne, the Poet appears to aim at something of the same sort from George. Of the poem the intention seems to have been, to show that he had the same extravagant strain of praise for a king as for a queen. To discover, at the very onset of a foreigner's reign, that the Gods bless his new subjects in such a king, is something more than praise. Neither was this deemed one of his *excusable pieces*. We do not find it in his works.

“ Young's father had been well acquainted with lady Anne Wharton, the first wife of Thomas Wharton, Esq. afterwards marquis of Wharton; a lady celebrated for her poetical talents by Burnet and by Waller.

“ To the Dean of Sarum's visitation sermon, already mentioned, were added some verses ‘ by that excellent poetess Mrs. Anne Wharton,’ upon its being translated into English, at the instance of Waller, by Atwood. Wharton, after he became ennobled, did not drop the son of his old friend. In him, during the short time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his dissolute descendant a friend and a companion. The Marquis died in April, 1715. In the beginning of the next year the young Marquis set out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland; where, says the ‘ Biographia,’ ‘ on the score of his extraordinary qualities, he had the honour done him of being admitted, though under age, to take his seat in the House of Lords.’



“ With this unhappy character, it is not unlikely that Young went to Ireland. From his Letter to Richardson on ‘ Original Composition,’ it is clear he was, at some period of his life, in that country. “ I remember,” says he, in that letter, speaking of Swift, “ as I and others were taking with him an evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short; we passed on; but perceiving he did not follow us, I went back and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which in its uppermost branches was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, ‘ I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top.’ ” Is it not probable, that this visit to Ireland was paid when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron?

“ From ‘ The Englishman’ it appears that a tragedy by Young was in the theatre so early as 1713. Yet ‘ Busiris’ was not brought upon Drury Lane Stage till 1719. It was inscribed to the duke of Newcastle, ‘ because the late instances he had received of his Grace’s undeserved and uncommon favour, in an affair of some consequence, foreign to the theatre, had taken from him the privilege of choosing a patron.’ The Dedication he afterwards suppressed.

“ Busiris was followed in the year 1721 by ‘ The Revenge.’ He dedicated this famous tragedy to the duke of Wharton. ‘ Your Grace,’ says the Dedication, ‘ has been pleased to make yourself accessory to the following scenes, not only by suggesting the most beautiful incident in

them, but by making all possible provision for the success of the whole.'

"That his Grace should have suggested the incident to which he alludes, whatever that incident might have been, is not unlikely. The last mental exertion of the superannuated young man, in his quarters at Lerida, in Spain, was some scenes of a tragedy on the story of Mary Queen of Scots.

"Dryden dedicated 'Marriage à la Mode' to Wharton's infamous relation Rochester, whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but as the promoter of his fortune. Young concludes his address to Wharton thus—'My present fortune is his bounty, and my future his care; which I will venture to say will be always remembered to his honour, since he, I know, intended his generosity as an encouragement to merit, though through his very pardonable partiality to one who bears him so sincere a duty and respect, I happen to receive the benefit of it.' That he ever had such a patron as Wharton, Young took all the pains in his power to conceal from the world, by excluding this dedication from his works. He should have remembered that he at the same time concealed his obligation to Wharton for *the most beautiful incident* in what is surely not his least beautiful composition. The passage just quoted is, in a poem afterwards addressed to Walpole, literally copied:

Be this thy partial smile from censure free!  
'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me.

“ While Young, who, in his ‘ Love of Fame,’ complains grievously how often ‘ dedications wash an Æthiop white,’ was painting an amiable duke of Wharton in perishable prose, Pope was, perhaps, beginning to describe the ‘ scorn and wonder of his days’ in lasting verse.

“ To the patronage of such a character, had Young studied men as much as Pope, he would have known how little to have trusted. Young, however, was certainly indebted to it for something material; and the Duke’s regard for Young, added to his ‘ lust of praise,’ procured to All Souls’ College a donation, which was not forgotten by the poet when he dedicated ‘ The Revenge.’

“ It will surprise you to see me cite second of Atkins, Case 136, Stiles *versus* the Attorney-General, March 14, 1740, as authority for the life of a poet. But biographers do not always find such certain guides as the oaths of the persons whom they record. Chancellor Hardwicke was to determine whether two annuities, granted by the duke of Wharton to Young, were for legal considerations. One was dated the 24th of March, 1719, and accounted for his Grace’s bounty in a style princely and commendable, if not legal—‘ considering that the public good is advanced by the encouragement of learning and the polite arts, and being pleased therein with the attempts of Dr. Young, in consideration thereof, and of the love I bear him, &c.’ The other was dated the 10th of July, 1722.

“ Young, on his examination, swore that he

quitted the Exeter family, and refused an annuity of £100, which had been offered him for life if he would continue tutor to lord Burleigh, upon the pressing solicitations of the duke of Wharton, and his Grace's assurances of providing for him in a much more ample manner. It also appeared that the Duke had given him a bond for £600, dated the 15th of March, 1721, in consideration of his taking several journeys, and being at great expenses, in order to be chosen member of the House of Commons, at the Duke's desire, and in consideration of his not taking two livings of £200 and £400 in the gift of All Souls' College, on his Grace's promises of serving and advancing him in the world.

“ Of his adventures in the Exeter family I am unable to give any account. The attempt to get into Parliament was at Cirencester, where Young stood a contested election. His Grace discovered in him talents for oratory as well as for poetry. Nor was this judgment wrong. Young, after he took orders, became a very popular preacher, and was much followed for the grace and animation of his delivery. By his oratorical talents he was once in his life, according to the ‘ Biographia,’ deserted. As he was preaching in his turn at St. James's, he plainly perceived it was out of his power to command the attention of his audience. This so affected the feelings of the preacher, that he sat back in the pulpit, and burst into tears. But we must pursue his poetical life.

“ In 1719 he lamented the death of Addison,

in a Letter addressed to their common friend Tickell. For the secret history of the following lines, if they contain any, it is now vain to seek:

*In joy once join'd, in sorrow, now, for years—  
Partner in grief, and brother of my tears,  
Tickell, accept this verse, thy mournful due.*

“ From your account of Tickell it appears that he and Young used to ‘ communicate to each other whatever verses they wrote, even to the least things.’

“ In 1719 appeared a ‘ Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job.’ Parker, to whom it is dedicated, had not long, by means of the seals, been qualified for a patron. Of this work the author’s opinion may be known from his Letter to Curll: “ You seem, in the Collection you propose, to have omitted what I think may claim the first place in it: I mean ‘ a Translation from Part of Job,’ printed by Mr. Tonson.” The Dedication, which was only suffered to appear in Mr. Tonson’s edition, while it speaks with satisfaction of his present retirement, seems to make an unusual struggle to escape from retirement. But every one who sings in the dark does not sing from joy. It is addressed, in no common strain of flattery, to a chancellor of whom he clearly appears to have had no kind of knowledge.

“ Of his Satires it would not have been possible to fix the dates without the assistance of first editions, which, as you had occasion to observe in your account of Dryden, are with difficulty found.

We must then have referred to the poems, to discover when they were written. For these internal notes of time we should not have referred in vain. The first Satire laments, that ‘Guilt’s chief foe in Addison is fled.’ The second, addressing himself, asks,

Is thy ambition sweating for a rhyme,  
Thou unambitious fool, at this late time?  
A fool at *forty* is a fool indeed.

“The Satires were originally published separately in folio, under the title of ‘The Universal Passion.’ These passages fix the appearance of the first to about 1725, the time at which it came out. As Young seldom suffered his pen to dry, after he had once dipped it in poetry, we may conclude that he began his Satires soon after he had written the ‘Paraphrase on Job.’ The last Satire was certainly finished in the beginning of the year 1726. In December 1725, the King, in his passage from Helvoetsluys, escaped with great difficulty from a storm by landing at Rye; and the conclusion of the Satire turns the escape into a miracle, in such an encomiastic strain of compliment as Poetry too often seeks to pay to Royalty.

“From the sixth of these poems we learn,

Midst empire’s charms, how Carolina’s heart  
Glow’d with the love of virtue and of art:

Since the grateful poet tells us, in the next couplet,

Her favour is diffus’d to that degree,  
Excess of goodness! it has dawn’d on me.



“ Her Majesty had stood godmother, and given her name, to the daughter of the lady whom Young married in 1731; and had perhaps shown some attention to lady Elizabeth’s future husband.

“ The fifth Satire, ‘ On Women,’ was not published till 1727; and the sixth not till 1728.

“ To these Poems, when, in 1728, he gathered them into one publication, he prefixed a Preface; in which he observes, that ‘ no man can converse much in the world, but at what he meets with he must either be insensible or grieve, or be angry or smile. Now to smile at it, and turn it into ridicule (he adds) I think most eligible, as it hurts ourselves least, and gives vice and folly the greatest offence. Laughing at the misconduct of the world will, in a great measure, ease us of any more disagreeable passion about it. One passion is more effectually driven out by another than by reason, whatever some teach.’ So wrote, and so of course thought, the lively and witty Satirist at the grave age of almost fifty, who, many years earlier in life, wrote the ‘ Last Day.’ After all, Swift pronounced of these Satires, that they should either have been more angry or more merry.

“ Is it not somewhat singular that Young preserved, without any palliation, this Preface, so bluntly decisive in favour of laughing at the world, in the same collection of his works which contains the mournful, angry, gloomy, ‘ Night Thoughts?’

“ At the conclusion of the Preface he applies Plato’s beautiful fable of the ‘ Birth of Love’ to modern poetry, with the addition, ‘ that Poetry,

like Love, is a little subject to blindness, which makes her mistake her way to preferments and honours: and that she retains a dutiful admiration of her father's family; but divides her favours, and generally lives with her mother's relations.' Poetry, it is true, did not lead Young to preferments or to honours; but was there not something like blindness in the flattery which he sometimes forced her, and her sister Prose, to utter? She was always, indeed, taught by him to entertain a most dutiful admiration of riches; but surely Young, though nearly related to Poetry, had no connexion with her whom Plato makes the mother of Love. That he could not well complain of being related to Poverty appears clearly from the frequent bounties which his gratitude records, and from the wealth which he left behind him. By 'The Universal Passion' he acquired no vulgar fortune, more than three thousand pounds. A considerable sum had already been swallowed up in the South-Sea. For this loss he took the vengeance of an author. His Muse makes poetical use more than once of a South-Sea Dream.

"It is related by Mr. Spence, in his Manuscript Anecdotes, on the authority of Mr. Rawlinson, that Young, upon the publication of his 'Universal Passion,' received from the duke of Grafton two thousand pounds; and that, when one of his friends exclaimed, 'Two thousand pounds for a poem!' he said it was the best bargain he ever made in his life, for the poem was worth four thousand.

“ This story may be true; but it seems to have been raised from the two answers of lord Burghley and sir Philip Sidney, in Spenser’s Life.

“ After inscribing his Satires, not perhaps without the hopes of preferments and honours, to such names as the duke of Dorset, Mr. Dodington, Mr. Spencer Compton, lady Elizabeth Germaine, and sir Robert Walpole, he returns to plain panegyric. In 1726 he addressed a poem to sir Robert Walpole, of which the title sufficiently explains the intention. If Young must be acknowledged a ready celebrator, he did not endeavour, or did not choose, to be a lasting one. ‘ The Instalment’ is among the pieces he did not admit into the number of his *excusable writings*. Yet it contains a couplet which pretends to pant after the power of bestowing immortality:

Oh! how I long, enkindled by the theme,  
In deep eternity to launch thy name!

“ The bounty of the former reign seems to have been continued, possibly increased, in this. Whatever it might have been, the poet thought he deserved it; for he was not ashamed to acknowledge what, without his acknowledgment, would now perhaps never have been known:

My breast, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire.  
The streams of royal bounty, turn’d by thee,  
Refresh the dry domains of poesy.

“ If the purity of modern patriotism will term Young a pensioner, it must at least be confessed he was a grateful one.

“ The reign of the new monarch was ushered in by Young with ‘ Ocean, an Ode.’ The hint of it was taken from the royal speech, which recommended the increase and the encouragement of the seamen; that they might be ‘ invited, rather than compelled by force and violence, to enter into the service of their country;’ a plan which humanity must lament that policy has not even yet been able, or willing, to carry into execution. Prefixed to the original publication were an ‘ Ode to the King, Pater Patriæ,’ and an ‘ Essay on Lyric Poetry.’ It is but justice to confess, that he preserved neither of them; and that the Ode itself, which in the first edition, and in the last, consists of seventy-three stanzas, in the author’s own edition is reduced to forty-nine. Among the omitted passages is a ‘ Wish’ that concluded the poem, which few would have suspected Young of forming; and of which few, after having formed it, would confess something like their shame by suppression.

“ It stood originally so high in the author’s opinion, that he intituled the poem, ‘ Ocean, an Ode. Concluding with a Wish.’ This wish consists of thirteen stanzas. The first runs thus:

O may I *steal*  
Along the *vale*  
Of humble life, secure from foes!  
My friend sincere,  
My judgment clear,  
And gentle business my repose!

“ The three last stanzas are not more remark-

able for just rhymes: but, altogether, they will make rather a curious page in the life of Young:

Prophetic schemes,  
And golden dreams,  
May I, unsanguine, cast away!  
Have what I *have*,  
And live, not *leave*  
Enamour'd of the present day!

My hours my own!  
My faults unknown!  
My chief revenue in content!  
Then leave one *beam*  
Of honest *fame*!  
And scorn the labour'd monument!

Unhurt my urn  
Till that great turn  
When mighty Nature's self shall die,  
Time cease to glide,  
With human pride,  
Sunk in the ocean of eternity!

“ It is whimsical that he, who was soon to bid adieu to rhyme, should fix upon a measure in which rhyme abounds even to satiety. Of this he said, in his ‘ Essay on Lyric Poetry,’ prefixed to the poem—‘ For the more *harmony* likewise I chose the frequent return of rhyme, which laid me under great difficulties. But difficulties overcome, give grace and pleasure. Nor can I account for the *pleasure of rhyme in general* (of which the moderns are too fond) but from this truth.’ Yet the moderns surely deserve not much censure for their fondness of what, by their own confession, affords pleasure, and abounds in harmony.

“ The next paragraph in his Essay did not occur to him when he talked of ‘ that great turn’ in the stanza just quoted. ‘ But then the writer must take care that the difficulty is overcome. That is, he must make rhyme consist with as perfect sense and expression, as could be expected if he was perfectly free from that shackle.’

“ Another part of this Essay will convict the following stanza of, what every reader will discover in it, ‘ involuntary burlesque:’

The northern blast,  
The shatter’d mast,  
The syrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,  
The breaking spout,  
The *stars gone out*,  
The boiling streight, the monster’s shock.

“ But would the English poets fill quite so many volumes, if all their productions were to be tried, like this, by an elaborate essay on each particular species of poetry of which they exhibit specimens?

“ If Young be not a lyric poet, he is at least a critic in that sort of poetry; and, if his lyric poetry can be proved bad, it was first proved so by his own criticism. This surely is candid.

“ Milbourne was styled by Pope ‘ the fairest of critics,’ only because he exhibited his own version of Virgil to be compared with Dryden’s which he condemned, and with which every reader had it not otherwise in his power to compare it. Young was surely not the most unfair of poets



for prefixing to a lyric composition an Essay on Lyric Poetry, so just and impartial as to condemn himself.

“ We shall soon come to a work, before which we find indeed no critical essay, but which disdains to shrink from the touchstone of the severest critic; and which certainly, as I remember to have heard you say, ‘ if it contain some of the worst, contains also some of the best things in the language.’

“ Soon after the appearance of ‘ Ocean,’ when he was almost fifty, Young entered into Orders. In April 1728, not long after he had put on the gown, he was appointed chaplain to George the Second.

“ The tragedy of ‘ The Brothers,’ which was already in rehearsal, he immediately withdrew from the stage. The managers resigned it with some reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman. The Epilogue to ‘ The Brothers,’ the only appendages to any of his three plays which he added himself, is, I believe, the only one of the kind. He calls it an historical Epilogue. Finding that ‘ Guilt’s dreadful close his narrow scene denied,’ he, in a manner, continues the tragedy in the Epilogue, and relates how Rome revenged the shade of Demetrius, and punished Perseus ‘ for this night’s deed.’

“ Of Young’s taking Orders something is told by the biographer of Pope, which places the easiness and simplicity of the poet in a singular light. When he determined on the Church, he

did not address himself to Sherlock, to Atterbury, or to Hare, for the best instructions in Theology; but to Pope, who, in a youthful frolic, advised the diligent perusal of Thomas Aquinas. With this treasure Young retired from interruption to an obscure place in the suburbs. His poetical guide to godliness hearing nothing of him during half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jest too far, sought after him, and found him just in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls ‘an irretrievable derangement.’

“That attachment to his favourite study, which made him think a poet the surest guide to his new profession, left him little doubt whether poetry was the surest path to its honours and preferments. Not long indeed after he took Orders, he published in prose, 1728, ‘A true Estimate of Human Life,’ dedicated, notwithstanding the Latin quotations with which it abounds, to the Queen; and a sermon preached before the House of Commons, 1729, on the martyrdom of King Charles, intituled, ‘An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government.’ But the ‘Second Course,’ the counterpart of his ‘Estimate,’ without which it cannot be called ‘A true Estimate,’ though in 1728 it was announced as ‘soon to be published,’ never appeared; and his old friends the Muses were not forgotten. In 1730 he relapsed to poetry, and sent into the world ‘Imperium Pelagi: a Naval Lyric, written in imitation of Pindar’s Spirit, occasioned by his Majesty’s Return from Hanover, September 1729, and the succeeding

Peace.' It is inscribed to the duke of Chandos. In the Preface we are told, that the Ode is the most spirited kind of Poetry, and that the Pindaric is the most spirited kind of Ode. 'This I speak,' he adds, 'with sufficient candour, at my own very great peril. But truth has an eternal title to our confession, though we are sure to suffer by it.' Behold, again, the fairest of poets. Young's 'Imperium Pelagi' was ridiculed in Fielding's 'Tom Thumb;' but, let us not forget that it was one of his pieces which the author of the 'Night Thoughts' deliberately refused to own.

"Not long after this Pindaric attempt, he published two Epistles to Pope, 'Concerning the Authors of the Age,' 1730. Of these poems one occasion seems to have been an apprehension lest, from the liveliness of his satires, he should not be deemed sufficiently serious for promotion in the Church.

"In July 1730 he was presented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn in Hertfordshire. In May 1731 he married lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the earl of Lichfield, and widow of colonel Lee. His connexion with this lady arose from his father's acquaintance, already mentioned, with lady Anne Wharton, who was coheiress of sir Henry Lee, of Ditchley in Oxfordshire. Poetry had lately been taught by Addison to aspire to the arms of nobility, though not with extraordinary happiness.

"We may naturally conclude that Young now gave himself up in some measure to the comforts

of his new connexion, and to the expectations of that preferment which he thought due to his poetical talents, or, at least, to the manner in which they had so frequently been exerted.

“ The next production of his Muse was ‘ The Sea-piece,’ in two odes.

“ Young enjoys the credit of what is called an ‘ Extempore Epigram on Voltaire;’ who, when he was in England, ridiculed, in the company of the jealous English poet, Milton’s allegory of Sin and Death——

You are so witty, profligate, and thin,  
At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin.

“ From the following passage in the poetical Dedication of his ‘ Sea-piece’ to Voltaire, it seems that this extemporaneous reproof, if it must be extemporaneous, (for what few will now affirm Voltaire to have deserved any reproof?) was something longer than a distich, and something more gentle than the distich just quoted.

No stranger, sir, though born in foreign climes.  
On *Dorset* downs, when Milton’s page  
With Sin and Death provok’d thy rage,  
Thy rage provok’d, who sooth’d with *gentle* rhymes?

“ By ‘ Dorset Downs’ he probably meant Mr. Dodington’s seat. In Pitt’s Poems is ‘ An Epistle to Dr. Edward Young, at Eastbury in Dorsetshire, on the Review at Sarum, 1722.’

While with your Dodington retir’d you sit,  
Charm’d with his flowing Burgundy and wit, &c.

“ Thomson, in his ‘ Autumn,’ addressing Mr. Dodington, calls his seat the seat of the Muses,

Where, in the secret bower and winding walk,  
For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.

“ The praises Thomson bestows but a few lines before on Philips, the second,

Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfetter’d verse,  
With British freedom sing the British song,

added to Thompson’s example and success, might perhaps induce Young, as we shall see presently, to write his great work without rhyme.

“ In 1734 he published ‘ The Foreign Address, or the best Argument for Peace, occasioned by the British Fleet and the Posture of Affairs. Written in the Character of a Sailor.’ It is not to be found in the author’s four volumes.

“ He now appears to have given up all hopes of overtaking Pindar, and perhaps at last resolved to turn his ambition to some original species of poetry. This poem concludes with a formal farewell to Ode, which few of Young’s readers will regret:

My shell, which Clio gave, which *Kings applaud*,  
Which Europe’s bleeding Genius call’d abroad,  
Adieu!

“ In a species of poetry altogether his own, he next tried his skill, and succeeded.

“ Of his wife he was deprived in 1741. Lady Elizabeth had lost, after her marriage with Young, an amiable daughter, by her former husband, just after she was married to Mr. Temple, son of lord Palmerston. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife, though he was married a second

time, to a daughter of sir John Barnard's, whose son is the present peer. Mr. and Mrs. Temple have generally been considered as Philander and Narcissa. From the great friendship which constantly subsisted between Mr. Temple and Young, as well as from other circumstances, it is probable that the poet had both him and Mrs. Temple in view for these characters; though at the same time some passages respecting Philander do not appear to suit either Mr. Temple or any other person with whom Young was known to be connected or acquainted, while all the circumstances relating to Narcissa have been constantly found applicable to Young's daughter-in-law.

“ At what short intervals the poet tells us he was wounded by the deaths of the three persons particularly lamented, none that has read the ‘ Night Thoughts’ (and who has not read them?) needs to be informed.

Insatiate Archer ! could not one suffice ?

Thy shaft flew thrice ; and thrice my peace was slain ;

And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

“ Yet how is it possible that Mr. and Mrs. Temple and lady Elizabeth Young could be these three victims, over whom Young has hitherto been pitied for having to pour the ‘ Midnight Sorrows’ of his religious poetry; Mrs. Temple died in 1736; Mr. Temple four years afterwards in 1740; and the poet's wife seven months after Mr. Temple, in 1741. How could the insatiate Archer thrice slay his peace, in these three persons, ‘ ere thrice the moon had fill'd her horn?’

“ But in the short Preface to ‘ The Complaint’ he seriously tells us, ‘ that the occasion of this poem was real, not fictitious; and that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.’ It is probable, therefore, that in these three contradictory lines, the poet complains more than the father-in-law, the friend, or the widower.

“ Whatever names belong to these facts, or, if the names be those generally supposed, whatever heightening a poet’s sorrow may have given the facts; to the sorrow Young felt from them, religion and morality are indebted for the ‘ Night Thoughts.’ There is a pleasure sure in sadness which mourners only know!

“ Of these poems the two or three first have been perused perhaps more eagerly and more frequently than the rest. When he got as far as the fourth or fifth, his original motive for taking up the pen was answered; his grief was naturally either diminished or exhausted. We still find the same pious poet; but we hear less of Philander and Narcissa, and less of the mourner whom we loved to pity.

“ Mrs. Temple died of a consumption at Lyons, in her way to Nice, the year after her marriage; that is, when poetry relates the fact, ‘ in her bridal hour.’ It is more than poetically true, that Young accompanied her to the continent:

I flew, I snatch’d her from the rigid North,  
And bore her nearer to the sun.

“ But in vain. Her funeral was attended with the difficulties painted in such animated colours in

‘ Night the Third.’ After her death, the remainder of the party passed the ensuing winter at Nice.

“ The poet seems perhaps in these compositions to dwell with more melancholy on the death of Philander and Narcissa, than of his wife. But it is only for this reason. He who runs and reads may remember, that in the ‘ Night Thoughts’ Philander and Narcissa are often mentioned and often lamented. To recollect lamentations over the author’s wife, the memory must have been charged with distinct passages. This lady brought him one child, Frederic, now living, to whom the prince of Wales was godfather.

“ That domestic grief is, in the first instance, to be thanked for these ornaments to our language, it is impossible to deny. Nor would it be common hardness to contend, that worldly discontent had no hand in these joint productions of poetry and piety. Yet am I by no means sure that, at any rate, we should not have had something of the same colour from Young’s pencil, notwithstanding the liveliness of his satires. In so long a life, causes for discontent and occasions for grief must have occurred. It is not clear to me that his Muse was not sitting upon the watch for the first which happened. ‘ Night Thoughts’ were not uncommon to her, even when first she visited the poet, and at a time when he himself was remarkable neither for gravity nor gloominess. In his ‘ Last Day,’ almost his earliest poem, he calls her ‘ The Melancholy Maid,’

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whom dismal scenes delight,  
Frequent at tombs and in the realms of Night.



“ In the prayer which concludes the second book of the same poem, he says—

— Oh! permit the gloom of solemn night  
To sacred thought may forcibly invite.  
Oh! how divine to tread the milky way,  
To the bright palace of Eternal Day!

“ When Young was writing a tragedy, Grafton is said by Spence to have sent him a human skull, with a candle in it, as a lamp; and the poet is reported to have used it.

“ What he calls ‘ The *true* Estimate of Human Life,’ which has already been mentioned, exhibits only the wrong side of the tapestry; and, being asked why he did not show the right, he is said to have replied, that he could not. By others it has been told me that this was finished; but that, before there existed any copy, it was torn in pieces by a lady’s monkey.

“ Still, is it altogether fair to dress up the poet for the man, and to bring the gloominess of the ‘ Night Thoughts’ to prove the gloominess of Young, and to show that his genius, like the genius of Swift, was in some measure the sullen inspiration of discontent?

“ From them who answer in the affirmative it should not be concealed that, though ‘ Invisibilia non decipiunt’ appeared upon a deception in Young’s grounds, and ‘ Ambulantes in horto audiêrunt vocem Dei’ on a building in his garden, his parish was indebted to the good humour of the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts’ for an assembly and a bowling-green.

“ Whether you think with me, I know not; but the famous ‘ *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*’ always appeared to me to savour more of female weakness than of manly reason. He that has too much feeling to speak ill of the dead, who, if they cannot defend themselves, are at least ignorant of his abuse, will not hesitate by the most wanton calumny to destroy the quiet, the reputation, the fortune, of the living. Yet censure is not heard beneath the tomb, any more than praise. ‘ *De mortuis nil nisi verum—De vivis nil nisi bonum*’—would approach much nearer to good sense. After all, the few handfuls of remaining dust which once composed the body of the author of the ‘ *Night Thoughts*’ feel not much concern whether Young pass now for a man of sorrow, or for a ‘ fellow of infinite jest.’ To this favour must come the whole family of Yorick. His immortal part, wherever that now dwells, is still less solicitous on this head.

“ But to a son of worth and sensibility it is of some little consequence whether contemporaries believe, and posterity be taught to believe, that his debauched and reprobate life cast a Stygian gloom over the evening of his father’s days, saved him the trouble of feigning a character completely detestable, and succeeded at last in bringing his ‘ grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.’

“ The humanity of the world, little satisfied with inventing perhaps a melancholy disposition for the father, proceeds next to invent an argument in support of their invention, and chooses

that Lorenzo should be Young's own son. The 'Biographia,' and every account of Young pretty roundly assert this to be the fact; of the absolute impossibility of which, the 'Biographia' itself, in particular dates, contains undeniable evidence. Readers I know there are of a strange turn of mind, who will hereafter peruse the 'Night Thoughts' with less satisfaction; who will wish they had still been deceived; who will quarrel with me for discovering that no such character as their Lorenzo ever yet disgraced human nature, or broke a father's heart. Yet would these admirers of the sublime and terrible be offended, should you set them down for cruel and for savage.

"Of this report, inhuman to the surviving son, if it be true, in proportion as the character of Lorenzo is diabolical, where are we to find the proof? Perhaps it is clear from the poems.

"From the first line to the last of the 'Night Thoughts,' no one expression can be discovered which betrays any thing like the father. In the 'Second Night' I find an expression which betrays something else; that Lorenzo was his friend; one, it is possible, of his former companions; one of the duke of Wharton's set. The Poet styles him 'gay friend;' an appellation not very natural from a pious incensed father to such a being as he paints Lorenzo, and that being his son.

"But let us see how he has sketched this dreadful portrait, from the sight of some of whose features the artist himself must have turned away

with horror. A subject more shocking, if his only child really sat to him, than the crucifixion of Michael Angelo; upon the horrid story told of which, Young composed a short Poem of fourteen lines in the early part of his life, which he did not think deserved to be republished.

“ In the ‘ First Night,’ the address to the Poet’s supposed son is,

Lorenzo ! Fortune makes her court to thee.

“ In the ‘ Fifth Night’—

And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime  
Of life? to hang his airy nest on high?

“ Is this a picture of the son of the rector of Welwyn?

‘ Eighth Night’—

In foreign realms (for thou hast travell’d far)—

which even now does not apply to his son.

“ In ‘ Night Five’—

So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa’s fate;  
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes;  
And died to give him, orphan’d in his birth!

At the beginning of the ‘ Fifth Night’ we find—

Lorenzo ! to recriminate is just,  
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.

“ But, to cut short all inquiry; if any one of these passages, if any passage in the poems, be applicable, my friend shall pass for Lorenzo.

The son of the author of the ‘Night Thoughts’ was not old enough, when they were written, to recriminate, or to be a father. The ‘Night Thoughts’ were begun immediately after the mournful event of 1741. The first Nights appear, in the books of the company of Stationers, as the property of Robert Dodsley, in 1742. The preface to ‘Night Seven’ is dated July the 7th, 1744. The marriage, in consequence of which the supposed Lorenzo was born, happened in May 1731. Young’s child was not born till June 1733. In 1741 this Lorenzo, this finished infidel, this father to whose education vice had for some years put the last hand, was only eight years old.

“An anecdote of this cruel sort, so open to contradiction, so impossible to be true, who could propagate? Thus easily are blasted the reputations of the living and of the dead.

“Who, then, was Lorenzo? exclaim the readers I have mentioned. If we cannot be sure that he was his son, which would have been finely terrible, was he not his nephew, his cousin?

“These are questions which I do not pretend to answer. For the sake of human nature, I could wish Lorenzo to have been only the creation of the Poet’s fancy: like the Quintus of Anti Lucretius, ‘quo nomine,’ says Polignac, ‘quemvis Atheum intellige.’ That this was the case, many expressions in the ‘Night Thoughts’ would seem to prove, did not a passage in ‘Night Eight’ appear to show that he had something in his eye for the groundwork at least of the painting. Lovelace

or Lorenzo may be feigned characters; but a writer does not feign a name of which he only gives the initial letter:

Tell not Calista. She will laugh thee dead,  
Or send thee to her hermitage with L——.

“ The ‘ Biographia,’ not satisfied with pointing out the son of Young, in that son’s life-time, as his father’s Lorenzo, travels out of its way into the history of the son, and tells of his having been forbidden his college at Oxford for misbehaviour. How such anecdotes, were they true, tend to illustrate the life of Young, it is not easy to discover. Was the son of the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts,’ indeed, forbidden his college for a time, at one of the Universities? The author of ‘ Paradise Lost’ is by some supposed to have been disgracefully ejected from the other. From juvenile follies who is free? But, whatever the ‘ Biographia’ chooses to relate, the son of Young experienced no dismissal from his college, either lasting or temporary.

“ Yet, were nature to indulge him with a second youth, and to leave him at the same time the experience of that which is past, he would probably spend it differently—who would not?—he would certainly be the occasion of less uneasiness to his father. But, from the same experience, he would as certainly, in the same case, be treated differently by his father.

“ Young was a poet: poets, with reverence be it spoken, do not make the best parents. Fancy

and imagination seldom deign to stoop from their heights; always stoop unwillingly to the low level of common duties. Aloof from vulgar life, they pursue their rapid flight beyond the ken of mortals, and descend not to earth but when compelled by necessity. The prose of ordinary occurrences is beneath the dignity of poets.

“ He who is connected with the Author of the ‘Night Thoughts,’ only by veneration for the Poet and the Christian, may be allowed to observe, that Young is one of those, concerning whom, as you remark in your account of Addison, it is proper rather to say ‘nothing that is false than all that is true.’

“ But the son of Young would almost sooner, I know, pass for a Lorenzo, than see himself vindicated, at the expense of his father’s memory, from follies which, if it may be thought blaineable in a boy to have committed them, it is surely praiseworthy in a man to lament, and certainly not only unnecessary but cruel in a biographer to record.

“ Of the ‘Night Thoughts,’ notwithstanding their author’s professed retirement, all are inscribed to great or to growing names. He had not yet weaned himself from Earls and Dukes, from the Speakers of the House of Commons, Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and Chancellors of the Exchequer. In ‘Night Eight’ the politician plainly betrays himself——

Think no post needful that demands a knave:  
When late our civil helm was shifting hands,  
So P—— thought: think better if you can.

“ Yet it must be confessed, that at the conclusion of ‘ Night Nine,’ weary perhaps of courting earthly patrons, he tells his soul,

Henceforth

Thy *patron* lie, whose diadem has dropp’d  
Yon genis of Heaven; Eternity thy prize;  
And leave the racers of the world their own.

“ The ‘ Fourth Night’ was addressed by ‘ a much indebted Muse’ to the honourable Mr. Yorke, now lord Hardwicke; who meant to have laid the Muse under still greater obligation, by the living of Shenfield in Essex, if it had become vacant.

“ The ‘ First Night’ concludes with this passage—

Dark, though not blind, like thee, Meonides:  
Or Milton, thee. Ah! could I reach your strain;  
Or his who made Meonides our own!  
Man too he sung. Immortal man I sing.  
Oh, had he prest his theme, pursued the track  
Which opens out of darkness into day!  
Oh, had he mounted on his wing of fire,  
Soar’d, where I sink, and sung immortal man—  
How had it blest mankind, and rescu’d me!

“ To the author of these lines was dedicated, in 1756, the first volume of an ‘ Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope,’ which attempted, whether justly or not, to pluck from Pope his ‘ Wing of Fire,’ and to reduce him to a rank at least one degree lower than the first class of English poets. If Young accepted and approved the dedication, he countenanced this attack upon the fame of him whom he invokes as his Muse.



“ Part of ‘ paper-sparing’ Pope’s Third Book of the ‘ Odyssey,’ deposited in the Museum, is written upon the back of a letter signed E. Young, which is clearly the hand-writing of our Young. The letter, dated only May the 2d, seems obscure: but there can be little doubt that the friendship he requests was a literary one, and that he had the highest literary opinion of Pope. The request was a prologue, I am told.

“ May the 2d.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Having been often from home, I know not if you have done me the favour of calling on me. But, be that as it will, I much want that instance of your friendship I mentioned in my last; a friendship I am very sensible I can receive from no one but yourself. I should not urge this thing so much but for very particular reasons; nor can you be at a loss to conceive how a ‘ trifle of this nature’ may be of serious moment to me; and while I am in hopes of the great advantage of your advice about it, I shall not be so absurd as to make any further step without it. I know you are much engaged, and only hope to hear of you at your entire leisure.

“ I am, Sir, your most faithful

“ and obedient servant,

“ E. YOUNG.”

“ Nay, even after Pope’s death, he says, in ‘ Night Seven,’

Pope, who couldst make immortals, art thou dead?

“ Either the ‘ Essay’, then, was dedicated to a patron who disapproved its doctrine, which I have been told by the author was not the case; or Young appears, in his old age, to have bartered for a dedication an opinion entertained of his friend through all that part of life when he must have been best able to form opinions.

“ From this account of Young, two or three short passages, which stand almost together in ‘ Night Four,’ should not be excluded. They afford a picture by his own hand, from the study of which my readers may choose to form their own opinion of the features of his mind and the complexion of his life.

Ah me! the dire effect  
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;  
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)  
*My very master knows me not.*  
I’ve been so long remember’d, I’m forgot.

When in his courtiers’ ears I pour my plaint,  
They drink it as the nectar of the Great;  
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.

Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,  
Court-favour, yet untaken, I *besiege*.

If this song lives, Posterity shall know  
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
Who thought ev’n gold might come a day too late;  
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann’d his scheme  
For future vacancies in church or state.

“ Deduct from the writer’s age ‘ twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,’ and you will still leave him more than forty when he sat down to

the miserable siege of court-favour. He has before told us

A fool at forty is a fool indeed.

“ After all, the siege seems to have been raised only in consequence of what the General thought his ‘ death-bed.’

“ By these extraordinary Poems, written after he was sixty, of which I have been led to say so much, I hope, by the wish of doing justice to the living and the dead, it was the desire of Young to be principally known. He entituled the four volumes which he published himself, ‘ The Works of the Author of the Night Thoughts.’ While it is remembered that from these he excluded many of his writings, let it not be forgotten that the rejected pieces contained nothing prejudicial to the cause of virtue, or of religion. Were every thing that Young ever wrote to be published, he would only appear perhaps in a less respectable light as a poet, and more despicable as a dedicatory; he would not pass for a worse christian, or for a worse man. This enviable praise is due to Young. Can it be claimed by every writer? His dedications, after all, he had perhaps no right to suppress. They all, I believe, speak, not a little to the credit of his gratitude, of favours received; and I know not whether the author, who has once solemnly printed an acknowledgment of a favour, should not always print it.

“ Is it to the credit or to the discredit of Young, as a poet, that of his ‘ Night Thoughts’ the French are particularly fond?

“ Of the ‘ Epitaph on Lord Aubrey Beauclerk,’ dated 1740, all I know is, that I find it in the late body of English Poetry, and that I am sorry to find it there.

“ Notwithstanding the farewell which he seemed to have taken in the ‘ Night Thoughts’ of every thing which bore the least resemblance to ambition, he dipped again in politics. In 1745 he wrote ‘ Reflections on the public Situation of the Kingdom, addressed to the Duke of Newcastle;’ indignant, as it appears, to behold

— a pope-bred Princeling crawl ashore,  
And whistle cut throats, with those swords that scrap’d  
Their barren rocks for wretched sustenance,  
To cut his passage to the British throne.

“ This political poem might be called a Night Thought. Indeed it was originally printed as the conclusion of the ‘ Night Thoughts,’ though he did not gather it with his other works.

“ Prefixed to the second edition of Howe’s ‘ Devout Meditations’ is a Letter from Young, dated January 19, 1752, addressed to Archibald Macauley, Esq.; thanking him for the book, which he says ‘ he shall never lay far out of his reach; for a greater demonstration of a sound head and a sincere heart he never saw.’

“ In 1753, when ‘ The Brothers’ had lain by him above thirty years, it appeared upon the stage. If any part of his fortune had been acquired by servility of adulation, he now determined to deduct from it no inconsiderable sum, as a gift to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. To this sum he hoped the profits of

‘The Brothers’ would amount. In his calculation he was deceived; but by the bad success of his play the Society was not a loser. The author made up the sum he originally intended, which was a thousand pounds, from his own pocket.

“The next performance which he printed was a prose publication, entitled, ‘The Centaur not fabulous, in six Letters to a Friend on the Life in Vogue.’ The conclusion is dated November 29, 1754. In the third Letter is described the death-bed of the ‘gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont.’ His last words were—‘My principles have poisoned my friend, my extravagance has beggared my boy, my unkindness has murdered my wife!’ Either Altamont and Lorenzo were the twin production of fancy, or Young was unlucky enough to know two characters who bore no little resemblance to each other in perfection of wickedness. Report has been accustomed to call Altamont Lord Euston.

“‘The Old Man’s Relapse,’ occasioned by an Epistle to Walpole, if written by Young, which I much doubt, must have been written very late in life. It has been seen, I am told, in a Miscellany published thirty years before his death. In 1758, he exhibited ‘The Old Man’s Relapse’ in more than words, by again becoming a dedicator, and publishing a sermon addressed to the King.

“The lively Letter in prose, on ‘Original Composition,’ addressed to Richardson, the author of ‘Clarissa,’ appeared in 1759. Though he despair

‘ of breaking through the frozen obstructions of age and care’s incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought and brightness of expression which subjects so polite require;’ yet is it more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourscore. Some sevenfold volumes put him in mind of Ovid’s sevenfold channels of the Nile at the conflagration:

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ostia septem  
Pulverulenta vocant, septem sine flumine valles.

“ Such leaden labours are like Lycurgus’s iron money, which was so much less in value than in bulk, that it required barns for strong boxes, and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

“ If there is a famine of invention in the land, we must travel, he says, like Joseph’s brethren, far for food; we must visit the remote and rich antients. But an inventive genius may safely stay at home; that, like the widow’s cruse, is divinely replenished from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. He asks why it should seem altogether impossible, that Heaven’s latest editions of the human mind may be the most correct and fair? And Jonson, he tells us, was very learned, as Sampson was very strong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it.

“ Is this ‘ care’s incumbent cloud,’ or ‘ the frozen obstructions of age?’

“ In this letter Pope is severely censured for

his ‘fall from Homer’s numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the spheres, into childish shackles and tinkling sounds; for putting Achilles into petticoats a second time:’ but we are told that the dying swan talked over an Epic plan with Young a few weeks before his decease.

“Young’s chief inducement to write this letter was, as he confesses, that he might erect a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend. He, who employed his pious pen for almost the last time in thus doing justice to the exemplary death-bed of Addison, might probably, at the close of his own life, afford no unuseful lesson for the deaths of others.

“In the postscript, he writes to Richardson, that he will see in his next how far Addison is an original. But no other letter appears.

“The few lines which stand in the last edition, as ‘sent by lord Melcombe to Dr. Young, not long before his Lordship’s death,’ were indeed so sent, but were only an introduction to what was there meant by ‘The Muse’s latest Spark.’ The poem is necessary, whatever may be its merit, since the Preface to it is already printed. Lord Melcombe called his Tusculum ‘La Trappe.’

Love thy country, wish it well,  
Not with too intense a care,  
’Tis enough, that, when it fell,  
Thou its ruin didst not share.

Envy’s censure, Flattery’s praise,  
With unmov’d indifference view;  
Learn to tread life’s dangerous maze,  
With unerring Virtue’s clue.

Void of strong desire and fear,  
 Life's wide ocean trust no more;  
 Strive thy little bark to steer  
 With the tide, but near the shore.

Thus prepar'd, thy shorten'd sail  
 Shall, whene'er the winds increase,  
 Seizing each propitious gale,  
 Waft thee to the Port of Peace.

Keep thy conscience from offence,  
 And tempestuous passions free,  
 So, when thou art call'd from hence,  
 Easy shall thy passage be;

Easy shall thy passage be,  
 Cheerful thy allotted stay,  
 Short the' account 'twixt God and thee:  
 Hope shall meet thee on the way:

Truth shall lead thee to the gate,  
 Mercy's self shall let thee in,  
 Where its never-changing state  
 Full perfection shall begin.

“ The Poem was accompanied by a Letter.

“ *La Trappe*, the 27th of Oct. 1761.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ You seemed to like the ode I sent you for your amusement: I now send it you as a present. If you please to accept of it, and are willing that our friendship should be known when we are gone, you will be pleased to leave this among those of your own papers that may possibly see the light by a posthumous publication. God send us health while we stay, and an easy journey!

“ My dear Dr. Young,

“ Your's, most cordially,

“ MELCOMBE.”



“ In 1762, a short time before his death, Young published ‘ Resignation.’ Notwithstanding the manner in which it was really forced from him by the world, criticism has treated it with no common severity. If it shall be thought not to deserve the highest praise, on the other side of fourscore, by whom, except by Newton and by Waller, has praise been merited?

“ To Mrs. Montagu, the famous champion of Shakspeare, I am indebted for the history of ‘ Resignation.’ Observing that Mrs. Boscawen, in the midst of her grief for the loss of the admiral, derived consolation from the perusal of the ‘ Night Thoughts,’ Mrs. Montagu proposed a visit to the author. From conversing with Young, Mrs. Boscawen derived still further consolation; and to that visit she and the world were indebted for this poem. It compliments Mrs. Montagu in the following lines:

Yet write I must. A Lady sues:  
How shameful her request!  
My brain in labour with dull rhyme,  
Her’s teeming with the best!

And again——

And friend you have, and I the same,  
Whose prudent, soft address  
Will bring to life those healing thoughts  
Which died in your distress.  
That friend, the spirit of thy theme  
Extracting for your ease,  
Will leave to me the dreg, in thoughts  
Too common; such as these.

“ By the same Lady I was enabled to say, in  
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her own words, that Young's unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion than even in the author; that the Christian was in him a character still more inspired, more enraptured, more sublime, than the poet; and that, in his ordinary conversation,

—— letting down the golden chain from high,  
He drew his audience upward to the sky.

“ Notwithstanding Young had said, in his ‘ Conjectures on original Composition,’ that ‘ blank verse is verse unfallen, uncurs’d; verse reclaimed, re-inthroned in the true language of the gods:’ notwithstanding he administered consolation to his own grief in this immortal language, Mrs. Boscawen was comforted in rhyme.

“ While the poet and the Christian were applying this comfort, Young had himself occasion for comfort, in consequence of the sudden death of Richardson, who was printing the former part of the poem. Of Richardson’s death he says——

When Heaven would kindly set us free,  
And earth’s enchantment end;  
It takes the most effectual means,  
And robs us of a friend.

“ To ‘ Resignation’ was prefixed an Apology for its appearance: to which more credit is due than to the generality of such apologies, from Young’s unusual anxiety that no more productions of his old age should disgrace his former fame. In his will, dated February 1760, he desires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his

manuscript books and writings whatever might be burned, except his book of accounts.

“ In September 1764, he added a kind of codicil, wherein he made it his dying entreaty to his housekeeper, to whom he left £1000, ‘ that all his manuscripts might be destroyed as soon as he was dead, which would greatly oblige her deceased *friend*.’

“ It may teach mankind the uncertainty of worldly friendships, to know that Young, either by surviving those he loved, or by outliving their affections, could only recollect the names of two *friends*, his housekeeper and a hatter, to mention in his will; and it may serve to repress that testamentary pride, which too often seeks for sounding names and titles, to be informed that the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts’ did not blush to leave a legacy to his ‘ friend Henry Stevens, a hatter at the Temple-gate.’ Of these two remaining friends, one went before Young. But, at eighty-four, ‘ where,’ as he asks in *The Centaur*, ‘ is that world into which we were born?’

“ The same humility which marked a hatter and a housekeeper for the friends of the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts,’ had before bestowed the same title on his footman, in an epitaph in his ‘ Church-yard’ upon James Baker, dated 1749; which I am glad to find in the late collection of his works.

“ Young and his housekeeper were ridiculed, with more ill-nature than wit, in a kind of novel published by Kidgell in 1755, called ‘ The Card,’ under the names of Dr. Elwes and Mrs. Fusby.

“ In April 1765, at an age to which few attain, a period was put to the life of Young.

“ He had performed no duty for three or four years, but he retained his intellects to the last.

“ Much is told in the ‘ Biographia,’ which I know not to have been true, of the manner of his burial; of the master and children of a charity-school, which he founded in his parish, who neglected to attend their benefactor’s corpse; and of a bell which was not caused to toll as often as upon those occasions bells usually toll. Had that humanity, which is here lavished upon things of little consequence either to the living or to the dead, been shown in its proper place to the living, I should have had less to say about Lorenzo. They who lament that these misfortunes happened to Young, forget the praise he bestows upon Socrates, in the Preface to ‘ Night Seven,’ for resenting his friend’s request about his funeral.

“ During some part of his life Young was abroad, but I have not been able to learn any particulars.

“ In his seventh Satire he says,

When, after battle, I the field have seen  
Spread o’er with ghastly shapes which once were *men*.

“ It is known also, that from this or from some other field he once wandered into the camp with a classic in his hand, which he was reading intently; and had some difficulty to prove that he was only an absent poet, and not a spy.

“ The curious reader of Young’s life will naturally inquire to what it was owing, that though

he lived almost forty years after he took orders, which included one whole reign uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the least preferment. The author of the ‘Night Thoughts’ ended his days upon a living which came to him from his College without any favour, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the Church. To satisfy curiosity of this kind is, at this distance of time, far from easy. The parties themselves know not often, at the instant, why they are neglected, or why they are preferred. The neglect of Young is by some ascribed to his having attached himself to the Prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offensive sermon at St. James’s. It has been told me that he had two hundred a year in the late reign, by the patronage of Walpole; and that, whenever any one reminded the King of Young, the only answer was, ‘he has a pension.’ All the light thrown on this inquiry, by the following Letter from Secker, only serves to show at what a late period of life the author of the ‘Night Thoughts’ solicited preferment:

“Deanery of St. Paul’s, July 8, 1758.

“GOOD DR. YOUNG,

“I have long wondered, that more suitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by persons in power. But how to remedy the omission I see not. No encouragement hath ever been given me to mention things of this nature to his Majesty. And therefore, in all likelihood, the only consequence of doing it would be weak-

ening the little influence which else I may possibly have on some other occasions. Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement; and your sentiments above that concern for it, on your own account, which, on that of the public, is sincerely felt by

“ Your loving brother,

“ THO. CANT.”

“ At last, at the age of fourscore, he was appointed, in 1761, Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager.

“ One obstacle must have stood not a little in the way of that preferment after which his whole life seems to have panted. Though he took orders, he never entirely shook off politics. He was always the Lion of his master Milton, ‘ pawing to get free his hinder parts.’ By this conduct, if he gained some friends, he made many enemies.

“ Again: Young was a poet: and again, with reverence be it spoken, poets by profession do not always make the best clergymen. If the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts’ composed many sermons, he did not oblige the public with many.

“ Besides, in the latter part of life, Young was fond of holding himself out for a man retired from the world. But he seemed to have forgotten that the same verse which contains ‘ oblitus meorum,’ contains also ‘ obliviscendus et illis.’ The brittle chain of worldly friendship and patronage is broken as effectually, when one goes beyond the length of it, as when the other does.

To the vessel which is sailing from the shore, it only appears that the shore also recedes; in life it is truly thus. He who retires from the world will find himself, in reality, deserted as fast, if not faster, by the world. The public is not to be treated as the coxcomb treats his mistress; to be threatened with desertion, in order to increase fondness.

“ Young seems to have been taken at his word. Notwithstanding his frequent complaints of being neglected, no hand was reached out to pull him from that retirement of which he declared himself enamoured. Alexander assigned no palace for the residence of Diogenes, who boasted his surly satisfaction with his tub.

“ Of the domestic manners and petty habits of the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts,’ I hoped to have given you an account from the best authority: but who shall dare to say, To-morrow I will be wise or virtuous, or to-morrow I will do a particular thing? Upon inquiring for his housekeeper, I learned that she was buried two days before I reached the town of her abode.

“ In a letter from Tscharner, a noble foreigner, to Count Haller, Tscharner says, he has lately spent four days with Young at Welwyn, where the author tastes all the ease and pleasure mankind can desire. ‘ Every thing about him shows the man, each individual being placed by rule. All is neat without art. He is very pleasant in conversation, and extremely polite.’

“ This, and more, may possibly be true; but Tscharner’s was a first visit, a visit of curiosity

and admiration, and a visit which the author expected.

“ Of Edward Young an anecdote which wanders among readers is not true, that he was Fielding’s Parson Adams. The original of that famous painting was William Young, who was a clergyman. He supported an uncomfortable existence by translating for the booksellers from Greek; and, if he did not seem to be his own friend, was at least no man’s enemy. Yet the facility with which this report has gained belief in the world argues, were it not sufficiently known, that the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts’ bore some resemblance to Adams.

“ The attention which Young bestowed upon the perusal of books is not unworthy imitation. When any passage pleased him, he appears to have folded down the leaf. On these passages he bestowed a second reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned to much of what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books, which I have seen, are by those notes of approbation so swelled beyond their real bulk, that they will hardly shut.

What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame!  
Earth’s highest station ends in *Here he lies!*  
And *dust to dust* concludes her noblest song!

“ The author of these lines is not without his *Hic jacet.*

“ By the good sense of his son, it contains none of that praise which no marble can make the bad or the foolish merit; which, without the



direction of a stone or a turf, will find its way,  
sooner or later, to the deserving.

M. S.

Optimi Parentis

EDVARDI YOUNG, LL. D.

Hujus Ecclesiæ rect.

Et Elizabethæ

fœm. prænob.

Conjugis ejus amatissimæ,

Pio et gratissimo animo

Hoc marmor posuit

F. Y.

Filius superstes.

“ Is it not strange that the author of the ‘ Night Thoughts’ has inscribed no monument to the memory of his lamented wife? Yet, what marble will endure as long as the poems?

“ Such, my good friend, is the account which I have been able to collect of the great Young. That it may be long before any thing like what I have just transcribed be necessary for you, is the sincere wish of,

“ dear sir,

“ your greatly obliged friend,

“ Lincoln’s Inn,  
Sept. 1780.

“ HERBERT CROFT, jun.”

P. S. “ This account of Young was seen by you in manuscript, you know, Sir; and, though I could not prevail on you to make any alteration, you insisted on striking out one passage, because it said, that, if I did not wish you to live long for your sake, I did for the sake of myself and of the world. But this postscript you will not see before the printing of it; and I will say here, in

spite of you, how I feel myself honoured and bettered by your friendship: and that, if I do credit to the Church, after which I always longed, and for which I am now going to give in exchange the Bar, though not at so late a period of life as Young took Orders, it will be owing, in no small measure, to my having had the happiness of calling the author of 'The Rambler' my friend.

“ H. C.”

“ Oxford, Oct. 1782.

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OF Young's Poems it is difficult to give any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner: one of his pieces has no great resemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are sometimes smooth, and sometimes rugged; his style is sometimes concatenated, and sometimes abrupt; sometimes diffusive, and sometimes concise. His plan seems to have started in his mind at the present moment; and his thoughts appear the effect of chance, sometimes adverse, and sometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgment.

He was not one of those writers whom experience improves, and who, observing their own faults, become gradually correct. His Poem on the 'Last Day,' his first great performance, has an equability and propriety, which he afterwards either never endeavoured or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean, yet the whole is languid; the plan is too much

extended, and a succession of images divides and weakens the general conception; but the great reason why the reader is disappointed is, that the thought of the **LAST DAY** makes every man more than poetical, by spreading over his mind a general obscurity of sacred horror, that oppresses distinction, and disdains expression.

His story of ‘Jane Grey’ was never popular. It is written with elegance enough; but Jane is too heroic to be pitied.

The ‘Universal Passion’ is indeed a very great performance. It is said to be a series of Epigrams: but, if it be, it is what the author intended: his endeavour was at the production of striking distichs and pointed sentences; and his distichs have the weight of solid sentiments, and his points the sharpness of resistless truth.

His characters are often selected with discernment, and drawn with nicety; his illustrations are often happy, and his reflections often just. His species of satire is between those of Horace and Juvenal; and he has the gaiety of Horace without his laxity of numbers, and the morality of Juvenal with greater variation of images. He plays, indeed, only on the surface of life; he never penetrates the recesses of the mind, and therefore the whole power of his poetry is exhausted by a single perusal; his conceits please only when they surprise.

To translate he never condescended, unless his ‘Paraphrase on Job’ may be considered as a version: in which he has not, I think, been unsuccessful; he indeed favoured himself, by choosing

those parts which most easily admit the ornaments of English poetry.

He had least success in his lyric attempts, in which he seems to have been under some malignant influence: he is always labouring to be great, and at last is only turgid.

In his 'Night Thoughts' he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions, a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme but with disadvantage. The wild diffusion of the sentiments, and the digressive sallies of imagination, would have been compressed and restrained by confinement to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactness, but copiousness; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole; and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity.

His last poem was 'Resignation;' in which he made, as he was accustomed, an experiment of a new mode of writing, and succeeded better than in his 'Ocean' or his 'Merchant.' It was very falsely represented as a proof of decayed faculties. There is Young in every stanza, such as he often was in the highest vigour.

His tragedies, not making part of the collection, I had forgotten, till Mr. Steevens recalled them to my thoughts by remarking, that he seemed to have one favourite catastrophe, as his three plays

all concluded with lavish suicide; a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet easily rids his scene of persons whom he wants not to keep alive. In 'Busiris' there are the greatest ebullitions of imagination: but the pride of Busiris is such as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life to raise either grief, terror, or indignation. The 'Revenge' approaches much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps possession of the stage: the first design seems suggested by 'Othello;' but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral observations are so introduced, and so expressed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of 'The Brothers' I may be allowed to say nothing, since nothing was ever said of it by the public.

It must be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or selection. When he lays hold of an illustration, he pursues it beyond expectation, sometimes happily, as in his parallel of *Quicksilver* with *Pleasure*, which I have heard repeated with approbation by a Lady, of whose praise he would have been justly proud, and which is very ingenious, very subtle, and almost exact; but sometimes he is less lucky, as when, in his 'Night Thoughts,' having it dropped into his mind, that the orbs, floating in space, might be called the *cluster* of creation, he thinks of a cluster of grapes, and says, that they all hang on the great vine, drinking the 'nectareous juice of immortal life.'

His conceits are sometimes yet less valuable.

In the ‘ Last Day’ he hopes to illustrate the re-assembly of the atoms that compose the human body at the ‘ Trump of Doom,’ by the collection of bees into a swarm at the tinkling of a pan.

The Prophet says of Tyre, that ‘ her Merchants are Princes.’ Young says of Tyre in his ‘ Merchant,’

Her merchants Princes, and each *deck a Throne.*

Let burlesque try to go beyond him.

He has the trick of joining the turgid and familiar: to buy the alliance of Britain, ‘ Climes were paid down.’ Antithesis is his favourite, ‘ They for kindness hate:’ and ‘ because she’s right, she’s ever in the wrong.’

His versification is his own; neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any resemblance to those of former writers; he picks up no hemisticks, he copies no favourite expressions; he seems to have laid up no stores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous suggestions of the present moment. Yet I have reason to believe that, when once he had formed a new design, he then laboured it with very patient industry; and that he composed with great labour, and frequent revisions.

His verses are formed by no certain model; he is no more like himself in his different productions than he is like others. He seems never to have studied prosody, nor to have had any direction but from his own ear. But with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet.

## P R E F A C E.

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*As the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious, so the method pursued in it was rather imposed, by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed; which will appear very probable from the nature of it; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is, from long narrations to draw short morals: here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.*





THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT I.*

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ON  
LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

---

TO  
*THE RIGHT HON. ARTHUR ONSLOW, ESQ.*

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

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**T**IR'D Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!  
He, like the world, his ready visit pays  
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:  
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,  
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose  
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!  
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.  
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams  
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding  
thought

From wave to wave of fancied misery  
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.  
Though now restor'd 'tis only change of pain,  
(A bitter change!) severer for severe.  
The day too short for my distress; and night,  
Ev'n in the zenith of her dark domain,  
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,  
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth  
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.  
Silence how dead! and darkness how profound!  
Nor eye nor listening ear an object finds;  
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general pulse  
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause;  
An awful pause! prophetic of her end.  
And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd:  
Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence and Darkness! solemn sisters! twins  
From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought  
To reason, and on reason build resolve,  
(That column of true majesty in man)  
Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;  
The grave your kingdom: there this frame shall fall  
A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.  
But what are ye?—

Thou, who didst put to flight  
Primeval Silence, when the morning stars,  
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;  
O Thou, whose word from solid darkness struck  
That spark, the Sun, strike wisdom from my soul;  
My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,  
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Through this opaque of nature and of soul,  
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,  
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind,  
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe)  
Lead it through various scenes of life and death,  
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire.  
Nor less inspire my conduct than my song;  
Teach my best reason, reason; my best will  
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve  
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear:  
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd  
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes One. We take no note of time  
But from its loss: to give it then a tongue  
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke  
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,  
It is the knell of my departed hours.  
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.  
It is the signal that demands dispatch;  
How much is to be done? My hopes and fears  
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge  
Look down—on what? A fathomless abyss.  
A dread eternity! how surely mine!  
And can eternity belong to me,  
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,  
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!  
How passing wonder He who made him such!  
Who center'd in our make such strange extremes  
From diff'rent natures, marvelously mix'd,  
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!  
Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain!

Midway from nothing to the Deity;  
A beam ethereal, sullied and absorpt!  
Though sullied and dishonour'd, still divine!  
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!  
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!  
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!  
A worm! a god!—I tremble at myself,  
And in myself am lost. At home a stranger,  
Thought wanders up and down, surpris'd, aghast,  
And wondering at her own. How reason reels!  
O what a miracle to man is man!  
Triumphantly distress'd! what joy! what dread!  
Alternately transported and alarm'd!  
What can preserve my life! or what destroy!  
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave:  
Legions of angels can't confine me there.

'Tis past conjecture: all things rise in proof.  
While o'er my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spreads,  
What though my soul fantastic measures trod  
O'er fairy fields, or mourn'd along the gloom  
Of pathless woods, or down the craggy steep  
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool,  
Or scal'd the cliff, or danc'd on hollow winds  
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain!  
Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature  
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod,  
Active, ærial, towering, unconfin'd,  
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.  
Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul immortal;  
Ev'n silent night proclaims eternal day!  
For human weal Heaven husbands all events:  
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost?  
 Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs  
 around

In infidel distress? Are angels there?  
 Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire?

They live! they greatly live a life on earth  
 Unkindled, unconceiv'd, and from an eye  
 Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall  
 On me, more justly number'd with the dead.  
 This is the desert, this the solitude:  
 How populous, how vital is the grave!  
 This is Creation's melancholy vault,  
 The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom;  
 The land of apparitions, empty shades!  
 All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond  
 Is substance; the reverse is Folly's creed.  
 How solid all, where change shall be no more!

'This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,  
 The twilight of our day, the vestibule.  
 Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,  
 Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,  
 This gross impediment of clay remove,  
 And make us, embryos of existence, free.  
 From real life but little more remote  
 Is he, not yet a candidate for light,  
 The future embryo, slumbering in his sire.  
 Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,  
 Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,  
 The life of gods, O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts,  
 Inters celestial hopes without one sigh;  
 Prisoner of earth and pent beneath the moon,

Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heaven  
To fly at infinite; and reach it there,  
Where seraphs gather immortality.  
On Life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God,  
What golden joys ambrosial clustering glow  
In his full beam, and ripen for the just,  
Where momentary ages are no more!  
Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death  
expire!

And is it in the flight of threescore years!  
To push eternity from human thought,  
And smother souls immortal in the dust?  
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,  
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,  
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd  
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,  
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,  
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself.  
How was my heart incrust'd by the world!  
O how self-fetter'd was my groveling soul!  
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round  
In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,  
Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er,  
With soft conceit of endless comfort here,  
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend (as sung above:)  
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dream,  
Of things impossible! (could sleep do more?)  
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!  
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave;  
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!

How richly were my noon-tide trances hung  
With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys!  
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!  
Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue  
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,  
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.  
Where's now my frenzy's pompous furniture?  
The cobweb'd cottage, with its ragged wall  
Of mouldering mud, is royalty to me!  
The spider's most-attenuated thread  
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie  
On earthly bliss; it breaks at every breeze.

O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!  
Full above measure! lasting beyond bound!  
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.  
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,  
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,  
And quite unparadise the realms of light.  
Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres,  
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance  
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.  
Here teems with revolutions every hour,  
And rarely for the better; or the best  
More mortal than the common births of Fate.  
Each Moment has its sickle, enulous  
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep  
Strikes empires from the root: each Moment plays  
His little weapon in the narrow sphere  
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down  
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!  
Implicit treason to divine decree!

A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven!  
I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.  
O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,  
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine  
To tread our empire, and to quench the stars.  
The sun himself by thy permission shines,  
And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.  
Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust  
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?  
Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?  
Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?  
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;  
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.  
O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament  
Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel  
Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?  
How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile,  
Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,  
Self-given, solar ray of sound delight.

In every varied posture, place, and hour,  
How widow'd every thought of every joy!  
Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!  
Through the dark postern of time long elaps'd,  
Led softly, by the stillness of the night,  
Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)  
Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;  
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,  
And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts  
Of my departed joys, a numerous train!  
I rue the riches of my former fate;  
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;



I tremble at the blessings once so dear,  
And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why complain? or why complain for one?  
Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,  
The single man? are angels all beside?  
I mourn for millions; 'tis the common lot:  
In this shape or in that has Fate entail'd  
The mother's throes on all of woman born,  
Not more the children than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,  
Intestine broils, Oppression, with her heart  
Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.  
God's image, disinherited of day,  
Here plung'd in mines, 'forgets a sun was made;  
There beings, 'deathless as their haughty lord,  
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life;  
And plough the winter's wave, and reap despair.  
Some for hard masters, broken under arms,  
In battle lopp'd away, with half their limbs,  
Beg bitter bread through realms their valour sav'd,  
If so the tyrant, or his minions, doom:  
Want, and incurable disease, (fell pair!)  
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize  
At once, and make a refuge of the grave.  
How groaning hospitals eject their dead!  
What numbers groan for sad admission there!  
What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,  
Solicit the cold hand of Charity!  
To shock us more, solicit it in vain!  
Ye silken sons of Pleasure! since in pains  
You rue more modish visits, visit here,  
And breathe from your debauch; give, and reduce

Surfeit's dominion o'er you. But so great  
Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone.  
Not prudence can defend, or virtue save;  
Disease invades the chastest temperance,  
And punishment the guiltless; and alarm,  
Through thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.  
Man's caution often into danger turns,  
And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.  
Not Happiness itself makes good her name;  
Our very wishes give us not our wish.  
How distant oft the thing we dote on most,  
From that for which we dote, felicity!  
The smoothest course of Nature has its pains,  
And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.  
Without misfortune what calamities!  
And what hostilities without a foe!  
Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.  
But endless is the list of human ills,  
And sighs might sooner fail than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe  
Is tenanted by man? the rest a waste;  
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands!  
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death.  
Such is earth's melancholy map! but, far  
More sad! this earth is a true map of man:  
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights  
To woe's wide empire, where deep troubles toss,  
Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,  
Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,  
And threatening Fate wide opens to devour.

What then am I, who sorrow for myself?

In age, in infancy, from others' aid  
 Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind:  
 That Nature's first, last lesson to mankind.  
 The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels:  
 More generous sorrow, while it sinks exalts,  
 And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.  
 Nor virtue more than prudence bids me give  
 Swoln thought a second channel; who divide,  
 They weaken, too, the torrent of their grief.  
 Take, then, O world! thy much indebted tear.  
 How sad a sight is human happiness  
 To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!  
 O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults,  
 Wouldst thou I should congratulate thy fate?  
 I know thou wouldst! thy pride demands it from me.  
 Let thy pride pardon what thy nature needs,  
 The salutary censure of a friend.  
 Thou happy wretch! by blindness thou art blest;  
 By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles.  
 Know, smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;  
 Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.  
 Misfortune, like a creditor severe,  
 But rises in demand for her delay;  
 She makes a scourge of past prosperity,  
 To sting thee more, and double thy distress.

Lorenzo! Fortune makes her court to thee:  
 Thy fond heart dances while the syren sings.  
 Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;  
 I would not damp, but to secure thy joys.  
 Think not that fear is sacred to the storm;  
 Stand on thy guard against the smiles of Fate.  
 Is Heaven tremendous in its frowns? most sure;

And in its favours formidable too:  
Its favours here are trials, not rewards;  
A call to duty, not discharge from care,  
And should alarm us full as much as woes,  
Awake us to their cause and consequence,  
And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert;  
Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,  
Lest while we clasp we kill them; nay, invert  
To worse than simple misery their charms.  
Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,  
Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,  
With rage envenom'd rise against our peace.  
Beware what earth calls happiness; beware  
All joys, but joys that never can expire.  
Who builds on less than an immortal base,  
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine died with thee, Philander! thy last sigh  
Dissolv'd the charm; the disenchanted earth  
Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers?  
Her golden mountains where? all darken'd down  
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears.  
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece  
Of outcast earth, in darkness! what a change  
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,  
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd  
Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,  
Of virtuous praise! Death's subtle seed within,  
(Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,  
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd  
The worm to riot on that rose so red,  
Unfaded ere it fell; one moment's prey!

Man's foresight is conditionally wise.

Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns  
 Oft the first instant its idea fair  
 To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!  
 The present moment terminates our sight;  
 Clouds, thick as those on Doomsday, drown the  
     next:

We penetrate, we prophesy in vain.  
 Time is dealt out by particles, and each  
 Are mingled with the streaming sands of life,  
 By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn  
 Deep silence, 'Where eternity begins.'

By Nature's law what may be may be now;  
 There's no prerogative in human hours.  
 In human hearts what bolder thought can rise  
 Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?  
 Where is to-morrow? In another world.  
 For numbers this is certain; the reverse  
 Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,  
 This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,  
 As on a rock of adamant we build  
 Our mountain-hopes, spin out eternal schemes,  
 As we the Fatal Sisters would outspin,  
 And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not ev'n Philander had bespoke his shroud;  
 Nor had he cause; a warning was denied.  
 How many fall as sudden, not as safe?  
 As sudden, though for years admonish'd home.  
 Of human ills the last extreme beware;  
 Beware, Lorenzo! a slow-sudden death,  
 How dreadful that deliberate surprise!  
 Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer:  
 Next day the fatal precedent will plead;

Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.  
Procrastination is the thief of time;  
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,  
And to the mercies of a moment leaves  
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.  
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?  
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears  
The palm, ' That all men are about to live,'  
For ever on the brink of being born.  
All pay themselves the compliment to think  
They one day shall not drivel; and their pride  
On this reversion takes up ready praise;  
At least their own; their future selves applauds.  
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!  
Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;  
That lodg'd in Fate's to wisdom they consign;  
The thing they can't but purpose they postpone.  
'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool;  
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.  
All promise is poor dilatory man,  
And that through every stage. When young, indeed,  
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,  
Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,  
As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.  
At thirty man suspects himself a fool;  
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;  
At fifty chides his infamous delay,  
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;  
In all the magnanimity of thought  
Resolves; and re-resolves; then dies the same.  
And why? because he thinks himself immortal.

All men think all men mortal but themselves;  
 Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate  
 Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden  
 dread:

But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,  
 Soon close; where past the shaft no trace is found,  
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains,  
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel,  
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death.  
 Ev'n with the tender tear, which Nature sheds  
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.  
 Can I forget Philander? that were strange!  
 O my full heart!—But, should I give it vent,  
 The longest night, though longer far, would fail,  
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.

The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn.  
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,  
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer  
 The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,  
 And call the stars to listen: every star  
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.  
 Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,  
 And charm through distant ages. Wrapt in shade,  
 Prisoner of darkness! to the silent hours  
 How often I repeat their rage divine,  
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!  
 I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.  
 Dark, though not blind, like thee, Mæonides!  
 Or, Milton! thee; ah, could I reach your strain!  
 Or his who made Mæonides our own.  
 Man, too, he sung; immortal man I sing:

Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life:  
What, now, but immortality can please?  
O had he press'd his theme, pursued the track  
Which opens out of darkness into day!  
O had he mounted on his wings of fire,  
Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man!  
How had it blest mankind, and rescued me!

· END OF NIGHT FIRST.



THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT II.*

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ON  
TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP.

---

TO  
*THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.*

---

‘ **W**HEN the cock crew he wept,’ smote by that eye  
Which looks on me, on all; that Pow’r who bids  
This midnight centinel, with clarion shrill,  
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,  
Rouse souls from slumber into thoughts of Heav’n.  
Shall I too weep? Where then is fortitude?  
And fortitude abandon’d, where is man?  
I know the terms on which he sees the light:  
He that is born is listed: life is war;  
Eternal war with woe: who bears it best  
Deserves it least.—On other themes I’ll dwell.  
Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee  
And thine; on themes may profit; profit there

Where most thy need. Themes, too, the genuine  
growth

Of dear Philander's dust. He thus, though dead,  
May still befriend.—What themes? Time's wondrous price,

Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene.

So could I touch these themes as might obtain  
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag'd,  
The good deed would delight me; half impress  
On my dark cloud an Iris, and from grief

Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?

I know thou say'st it: says thy life the same?

He mourns the dead who lives as they desire.

Where is that thirst, that avarice of time,

(O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,

As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?

O Time! than gold more sacred; more a load

Than lead to fools, and fools reputed wise.

What moment granted man without account?

What years are squander'd, wisdom's debt unpaid!

Our wealth in days all due to that discharge.

Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door:

Insidious Death! should his strong hand arrest,

No composition sets the prisoner free.

Eternity's inexorable chain

Fast binds, and vengeance claims the full arrear.

How late I shudder'd on the brink! how late

Life call'd for her last refuge in despair!

That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe;

Fain would I pay thee with eternity;

But ill my genius answers my desire:

My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.

Accept the will;—that dies not with my strain.

For what calls thy disease, Lorenzo? not  
For Esculapian, but for moral aid.  
Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.  
Youth is not rich in time; it may be poor;  
Part with it as with money, sparing; pay  
No moment, but in purchase of its worth;  
And what its worth ask death-beds; they can tell.  
Part with it as with life, reluctant; big  
With holy hope of nobler time to come;  
Time higher aim'd, still nearer the great mark  
Of men and angels; virtue more divine.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?  
(These Heav'n benign in vital union binds)  
And sport we like the natives of the bough,  
When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns,  
Man's great demand: to trifle is to live:  
And is it then a trifle, too, to die?

Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo! 'tis confest.  
What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?  
Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?  
Is it not treason to the soul immortal,  
Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?  
Will toys amuse when med'cines cannot cure?  
When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes  
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,  
As lands, and cities with their glittering spires,  
To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm  
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there;  
Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys,  
And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time?—Its loss we dearly buy.

What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?  
 He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads  
 The straw-like trifles on life's common stream.  
 From whom those blanks and trifles but from thee?  
 No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant.  
 Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, still be thine;  
 'This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves  
 In act no trifle, and no blank in time.  
 'This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;  
 'This the blest art of turning all to gold;  
 'This the good heart's prerogative to raise  
 A royal tribute from the poorest hours;  
 Immense revenue! every moment pays.  
 If nothing more than purpose in thy pow'r,  
 Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed.  
 Who does the best his circumstance allows  
 Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.  
 Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint:  
 'Tis not in things o'er thoughts to domineer.  
 Guard well thy thought: our thoughts are heard  
 in Heav'n.

On all-important time, through ev'ry age,  
 'Tho' much and warm, the wise have urg'd, the man  
 Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.  
 'I've lost a day'—the prince who nobly cry'd,  
 Had been an emperor without his crown;  
 Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:  
 He spoke as if deputed by mankind.  
 So should all speak: so reason speaks in all:  
 From the soft whispers of that God in man,  
 Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,  
 For rescue from the blessings we possess?

Time, the supreme!—Time is eternity;  
Pregnant with all eternity can give;  
Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.  
Who murders Time, he crushes in the birth  
A power ethereal, only not ador'd.

Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself  
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!  
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,  
We censure Nature for a span too short;  
That span too short we tax as tedious too;  
Torture invention, all expedients tire,  
To lash the lingering moments into speed,  
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.  
Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer,  
(For Nature's voice unstifled would recall)  
Drives headlong tow'ards the precipice of death;  
Death most our dread; death thus more dreadful  
made;

O what a riddle of absurdity!  
Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot wheels;  
How heavily we drag the load of life!  
Blest leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,  
It makes us wander, wander earth around,  
To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd  
The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour.  
We cry for mercy to the next amusement;  
The next amusement mortgages our fields;  
Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,  
From hateful time if prisons set us free.  
Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief,  
We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,  
Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd

To man's false optics (from his folly false)  
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,  
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age.  
Behold him when past by; what then is seen  
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?  
And all mankind, in contradiction strong,  
Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors and these ills;  
To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.  
Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense;  
No niggard Nature; men are prodigals.  
We waste, not use our time: we breathe, not live.  
Time wasted is existence; us'd, is life:  
And bare existence man, to live ordain'd,  
Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.  
And why? since time was given for use, not waste,  
Enjoin'd to fly, with tempest, tide, and stars,  
To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man.  
Time's use was doom'd a pleasure, waste a pain,  
That man might feel his error if unseen,  
And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure;  
Not, blundering, split on idleness for ease.  
Life's cares are comforts; such by Heav'n design'd;  
He that has none must make them, or be wretched.  
Cares are employments; and without employ  
The soul is on a rack, the rack of rest,  
To souls most adverse, action all their joy.

Here then the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds;  
Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.  
We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan;  
We thwart the Deity; and 'tis decreed,  
Who thwart his will shall contradict their own.

Hence our unnatural quarrels with ourselves;  
 Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil;  
 We push 'Time from us, and we wish him back;  
 Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life;  
 Life we think long and short; death seek and shun;  
 Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,  
 United jar, and yet are loth to part.

Oh the dark days of vanity! while here  
 How tasteless! and how terrible when gone!  
 Gone? they ne'er go; when past, they haunt us still;  
 The spirit walks of every day deceas'd,  
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.  
 Nor death nor life delight us. If time past  
 And time possess both pain us, what can please?  
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,  
 Time us'd. The man who consecrates his hours  
 By vigorous effort and an honest aim,  
 At once he draws the sting of life and death;  
 He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen: see next  
 Time's nature, origin, importance, speed,  
 And thy great aim from urging his career.—  
 All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,  
 He looks on Time as nothing. Nothing else  
 Is truly man's; 'tis Fortune's.—Time's a god.  
 Hast thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence?  
 For, or against, what wonders can he do!  
 And will: to stand blank neuter he disdains.  
 Not on those terms was 'Time (Heaven's stranger!)

sent

On his important embassy to man.  
 Lorenzo! no: on the long-destin'd hour,

From everlasting ages growing ripe,  
That memorable hour of wondrous birth,  
When the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,  
And big with Nature, rising in his might,  
Call'd forth creation (for then Time was born)  
By Godhead streaming through a thousand worlds;  
Not on those terms, from the great days of Heav'n.  
From old Eternity's mysterious orb  
Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies;  
The skies, which watch him in his new abode,  
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres;  
That horologe machinery divine.  
Hours, days, and months, and years his children  
play,

Like numerous wings, around him, as he flies;  
Or rather, as unequal plumes, they shape  
His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,  
To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,  
And join anew Eternity his sire;  
In his immutability to nest,  
When worlds, that count his circles now, unhing'd  
(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush  
To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy? why with levities  
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight?  
Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done?  
Man flies from time, and time from man: too soon,  
In sad divorce, this double flight must end;  
And then where are we? where, Lorenzo, then  
Thy sports, thy pomps? I grant thee in a state  
Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud,  
Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.



Has Death his fopperies? Then well may Life  
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well-array'd! ye lilies of our land!  
Ye lilies male! who neither toil nor spin,  
(As sister lilies might) if not so wise  
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!  
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,  
Yourselves most insupportable! for whom  
The winter rose must blow, the sun put on  
A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft  
Favonius! breathe still softer, or be chid;  
And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,  
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!  
O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem  
One moment unamus'd a misery  
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud  
For every bawble drivell'd o'er by sense,  
For rattles and conceits of every cast;  
For change of follies and relays of joy,  
To drag your patient through the tedious length  
Of a short winter's day—say, sages! say,  
Wit's oracles! say, dreamers of gay dreams!  
How will you weather an eternal night,  
Where such expedients fail?

O treacherous Conscience! while she seems to  
sleep  
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with syren song;  
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop  
On headlong Appetite the slacken'd rein,  
And give us up to license, unrecall'd,  
Unmark'd;—see, from behind her secret stand,  
The sly informer minutes every fault,

And her dread diary with horror fills.  
Not the gross act alone employs her pen;  
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band.  
A watchful foe! the formidable spy  
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp;  
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,  
And steals our embryos of iniquity.  
As all-rapacious usurers conceal  
Their doomsday-book from all consuming heirs;  
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats  
Us spendthrifts of inestimable time,  
Unnoted, notes each moment misapply'd;  
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass  
Writes our whole history, which Death shall read  
In every pale delinquent's private ear,  
And judgment publish; publish to more worlds  
Than this; and endless age in groans resound.  
Lorenzo! such that sleeper in thy breast;  
Such is her slumber, and her vengeance such  
For slighted counsel; such thy future peace;  
And think'st thou still thou can'st be wise too soon?

But why on time so lavish is my song?  
On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school  
To teach her sons herself. Each night we die;  
Each morn are born anew; each day a life!  
And shall we kill each day? If trifling kills,  
Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain  
Cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd  
Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.  
Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,  
Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort all,  
More than creation, labours! Labours more.

And is there in creation what, amidst  
 This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,  
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—  
 Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate,  
 Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,  
 Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf  
 A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom  
 All else is in alarm; man, the sole cause  
 Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps,  
 As the storm rock'd to rest.—Throw years away?  
 Throw empires, and be blameless: moments seize,  
 Heaven's on their wing: a moment we may wish,  
 When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day  
      stand still,

Bid him drive back his car, and reimport  
 The period past, regive the given hour.  
 Lorenzo! more than miracles we want;  
 Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake,  
 His ardour such for what oppresses thee.  
 And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;  
 That more than miracle the gods indulge.  
 To-day is yesterday return'd; return'd  
 Full-power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,  
 And reinstate us on the rock of peace.  
 Let it not share its predecessor's fate,  
 Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool.  
 Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off  
 Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?  
 Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?  
 More wretched for the clemencies of Heav'n?  
      Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where:

You know him: he is near you; point him out.  
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,  
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?  
Your golden wings, now hovering o'er him, shed  
Protection; now are waving in applause  
To that blest son of foresight! lord of fate!  
That awful independent on to-morrow!  
Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;  
Whose yesterdays look backward with a smile;  
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;  
That common but opprobrious lot! Past hours,  
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,  
If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,  
All feeling of futurity benumb'd;  
All godlike passion for eternals quench'd;  
All relish of realities expir'd;  
Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies:  
Our freedom chain'd; quite wingless our desire;  
In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;  
Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust;  
Dismounted every great and glorious aim;  
Imbruted every faculty divine:  
Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world,  
The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,  
Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire  
To reach the distant skies, and triumph there  
On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters  
    chang'd;  
Though we from earth, ethereal they that fell.  
Such veneration due, O man, to man!  
    Who venerate themselves the world despise.  
For what, gay friend! is this escutcheon'd world,

Which hangs out death in one eternal night?  
A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,  
And wraps our thought at banquets in the shroud.  
Life's little stage is a small eminence,  
Inch-high the grave above, that home of man,  
Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around;  
We read their monument; we sigh; and while  
We sigh we sink; and are what we deplor'd:  
Lamenting or lamented all our lot!

Is Death at distance? No: he has been on thee,  
And giv'n sure earnest of his final blow.  
Those hours which lately smil'd, where are they  
now?

Pallid to thought, and ghastly! drown'd, all drown'd  
In that great deep which nothing disembogues!  
And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.  
The rest are on the wing: how fleet their flight!  
Already has the fatal train took fire;  
A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;  
The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past Hours;  
And ask them what report they bore to Heav'n;  
And how they might have borne more welcome  
news.

Their answers form what men Experience call;  
If Wisdom's friend her best; if not, worst foe.  
O reconcile them! kind experience cries,  
'There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs;  
The more our joy, the more we know it vain,  
And by success are tutor'd to despair.'  
Nor is it only thus, but must be so.  
Who knows not this, though grey, is still a child.

Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,  
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,  
Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes?  
Since by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,  
Light as the summer's dust, we take in air  
A moment's giddy flight, and fall again,  
Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,  
And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more;  
Since then (as emmets, their small world o'er-  
thrown)

We, sore amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,  
And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,  
As man's own choice (controller of the skies!)  
As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour,  
(O how omnipotent is time!) decrees,  
Should not each warning give a strong alarm?  
Warning, far less than that of bosom torn  
From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!  
Should not each dial strike us as we pass,  
Portentous, as the written wall which struck,  
O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,  
Ere-while high-flush'd with insolence and wine?  
Like that, the dial speaks, and points to thee,  
Lorenzo! loth to break thy banquet up:  
'O Man! thy kingdom is departing from thee;  
And while it lasts is emptier than my shade.'  
Its silent language such; nor need'st thou call  
Thy Magi to decipher what it means.  
Know, like the Medean, Fate is in thy walls:  
Dost ask how? whence? Belshazzar-like, amaz'd.  
Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death;

Life feeds the murderer: ingrate! he thrives  
On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies;  
That solar shadow, as it measures life,  
It life resembles too: Life speeds away  
From point to point, though seeming to stand still.  
The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth:  
Too subtle is the movement to be seen;  
Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.  
Warnings point out our danger; gnomons, time:  
As these are useless when the sun is set,  
So those, but when more glorious Reason shines.  
Reason should judge in all; in Reason's eye  
That sedentary shadow travels hard:  
But such our gravitation to the wrong,  
So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,  
'Tis later with the wise than he's aware.  
A Wilmington goes slower than the sun;  
And all mankind mistake their time of day;  
Ev'n age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown  
In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,  
We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.  
We take fair days in winter for the spring,  
And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft  
Man must compute that age he cannot feel,  
He scarce believes he's older for his years.  
Thus at life's latest eve we keep in store  
One disappointment sure, to crown the rest;  
The disappointment of a promis'd hour.

On this or similar, Philander! thou,  
Whose mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,  
And strong to wield all science worth the name,

How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,  
And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!  
How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve,  
By conflict kind, that struck our latent truth,  
Best found so sought, to the recluse more coy!  
Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip;  
Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,  
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song;  
Song fashionably fruitless, such as stains  
The fancy, and unhallow'd passion fires,  
Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane.

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?  
As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flowers,  
So men from Friendship, wisdom and delight;  
Twins tied by Nature; if they part they die.  
Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad?  
Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up want  
air,

And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.  
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been  
denied:

Speech, thought's canal! speech, thought's criterion too!

Thought in the mine may come forth gold or dross;  
When coin'd in words, we know its real worth:  
If sterling, store it for thy future use;  
'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.  
Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd;  
Teaching we learn, and giving we retain  
The births of intellect; when dumb forgot.  
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;  
Speech burnishes our mental magazine;



Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.  
What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie  
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,  
And rusted in, who might have borne an edge,  
And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech,  
If born blest heirs to half their mother's tongue!  
'Tis thought's exchange, which, like the' alternate  
push

Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,  
And defecates the student's standing pool.

In contemplation is his proud resource?  
'Tis poor as proud, by converse unsustain'd.  
Rude thought runs wild in Contemplation's field;  
Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit  
Of due restraint; and Emulation's spur  
Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.  
'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,  
As exercise for salutary rest:  
By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves;  
And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.

Wisdom, though richer than Peruvian mines,  
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,  
What is she but the means of happiness?  
That unobtain'd, than Folly more a fool;  
A melancholy fool, without her bells.  
Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives  
The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.  
Nature, in zeal for human amity,  
Denies or damps an undivided joy.  
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;  
Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two:  
Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluck'd by one.

Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give  
To social man true relish of himself.  
Full on ourselves descending in a line,  
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:  
Delight intense is taken by rebound;  
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial Happiness! whene'er she stoops  
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,  
And one alone, to make her sweet amends  
For absent Heav'n—the bosom of a friend;  
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,  
Each other's pillow to repose divine.  
Beware the counterfeit; in passion's flame  
Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder froze.  
True love strikes root in reason, passion's foe:  
Virtue alone intenders us for life:  
I wrong her much—intenders us for ever.  
Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair  
Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,  
And emulously rapid in her race.  
O the soft enmity! endearing strife!  
This carries Friendship to her noon-tide point,  
And gives the rivet of eternity.

From friendship, which outlives my former  
themes,  
Glorious survivor of old Time and Death!  
From friendship, thus, that flow'r of heavenly seed,  
The wise extract earth's most hyblean bliss,  
Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.

But for whom blossoms this Elysian flower?  
Abroad they find who cherish it at home.  
Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts,

An honest love, and not afraid to frown.  
Though choice of follies fasten on the great,  
None clings more obstinate than fancy fond,  
That sacred friendship is their easy prey,  
Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,  
Or fascination of a high-born smile.  
Their smiles the great, and the coquet, throw out  
For others' hearts, tenacious of their own;  
And we no less of ours, when such the bait.  
Ye Fortune's cofferers! ye powers of Wealth!  
You do your rent-rolls most felonious wrong,  
By taking our attachment to yourselves.  
Can gold gain friendship? impudence of hope!  
As well mere man an angel might beget.  
Love, and love only, is the loan for love.  
Lorenzo! pride repress, nor hope to find  
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.  
All like the purchase, few the price will pay,  
And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)  
I show thee friendship delicate as dear,  
Of tender violations apt to die?  
Reserve will wound it, and distrust destroy.  
Deliberate on all things with thy friend:  
But since friends grow not thick on every bough,  
Nor every friend unrotten at the core,  
First on thy friend deliberate with thyself;  
Pause, ponder, sift; not eager in the choice,  
Nor jealous of the chosen: fixing, fix;  
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.  
Well for thy friend, but nobler far for thee.  
How gallant danger for earth's highest prize!

A friend is worth all hazards we can run.  
' Poor is the friendless master of a world:  
A world in purchase for a friend is gain.'

So sung he (angels hear that angel sing!  
Angels from friendship gather half their joy)  
So sung Philander, as his friend went round  
In the rich ichor, in the generous blood  
Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,  
A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.  
He drank long health and virtue to his friend,  
His friend! who warm'd him more, who more  
inspir'd.

Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship new  
(Not such was his) is neither strong nor pure.  
O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,  
And elevating spirit of a friend,  
For twenty summers ripening by my side,  
All feculence of falsehood long thrown down,  
All social virtues rising in his soul,  
As crystal clear, and smiling as they rise!  
Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight;  
Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.  
High-flavour'd bliss for gods! on earth how rare!  
On earth how lost!—Philander is no more.

'Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song?  
Am I too warm?—Too warm I cannot be.  
I lov'd him much, but now I love him more.  
Like birds, whose beauties languish, half-conceal'd,  
Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes  
Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold;  
How blessings brighten as they take their flight!  
His flight Philander took, his upward flight,

If ever soul ascended. Had he dropp'd,  
(That eagle genius!) O had he let fall  
One feather as he flew, I then had wrote  
What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear,  
Rivals scarce damn, and Zoilus reprieve.  
Yet what I can I must: it were profane  
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,  
And cast in shadows his illustrious close.  
Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime,  
Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung!  
And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd,  
Painim or Christian, to the blush of Wit.  
Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,  
The death-bed of the just! is yet undrawn  
By mortal hand; it merits a divine:  
Angels should paint it, angels ever there,  
There on a post of honour and of joy.

Dare I presume, then? but Philander bids,  
And glory tempts, and inclination calls.  
Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath  
Aërial groves' impeuetrable gloom,  
Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade,  
Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born dust  
In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings,  
Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.  
It is religion to proceed: I pause—  
And enter, aw'd, the temple of my theme.  
Is it his death-bed? No; it is his shrine:  
Behold him there just rising to a god.

The chamber where the good man meets his  
fate  
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk  
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of Heav'n.

Fly, ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,  
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance  
That threw in this Bethesda your disease:  
If unrestor'd by this, despair your cure;  
For here resistless Demonstration dwells.  
A death-bed's a detector of the heart.  
Here tir'd Dissimulation drops her mask  
Through Life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!  
Here real and apparent are the same.  
You see the man, you see his hold on Heav'n,  
If sound his virtue, as Philander's sound.  
Heav'n waits not the last moment; owns her friends  
On this side death, and points them out to men;  
A lecture silent, but of sovereign pow'r!  
To Vice confusion, and to Virtue peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,  
Virtue alone has majesty in death,  
And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.  
Philander! he severely frown'd on thee.  
' No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate!  
A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!  
A wrench from all we love! from all we are!  
A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque  
Beyond conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!  
Strong Reason's shudder, at the dark unknown!  
A sun extinguish'd! a just-opening grave!  
And, oh! the last, last; what? (can words express,  
Thought reach it?) the last—silence of a friend!  
Where are those horrors, that amazement, where  
This hideous group of ills which singly shock,  
Demand from man.—I thought him man till now.

Through Nature's wreck, through vanquish'd  
agonies,

(Like the stars struggling through this midnight gloom)

What gleams of joy? what more than human peace?  
Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?  
No, not in death the mortal to be found.  
His conduct is a legacy for all,  
Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.  
His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,  
With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields  
His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burn within us at the scene!  
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?  
His God sustains him in his final hour!  
His final hour brings glory to his God!  
Man's glory Heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.  
We gaze, we weep; mix'd tears of grief and joy!  
Amazement strikes! devotion bursts to flame!  
Christians adore! and infidels believe.

As some tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow,  
Detains the sun, illustrious, from its height,  
While rising vapours and descending shades,  
With damps and darkness drown the spacious vale,  
Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,  
Philander thus augustly rears his head,  
At that black hour which general horror sheds  
On the low level of the' inglorious throng:  
Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,  
Divinely beam on his exalted soul;  
Destruction gild and crown him for the skies,  
With incommunicable lustre bright.

THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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---

*NIGHT III.*

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---

NARCISSA.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF PORTLAND.

---

*Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.*

VIRG.

---

FROM dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze  
runs mad,

To reason, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man,  
Once more I wake; and at the destin'd hour,  
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,  
I keep my assignation with my woe.

O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,  
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul!  
Who think it solitude to be alone.  
Communion sweet! communion large and high!  
Our reason, guardian-angel, and our god!  
Then nearest these, when others most remote;



And all, ere long, shall be remote but these:  
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,  
A stranger! unacknowledg'd! unapprov'd!  
Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast:  
To win thy wish creation has no more:  
Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.—  
But friends how mortal! dangerous the desire.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards!  
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head,  
And reeling through the wilderness of joy,  
Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's  
chain,

And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.  
My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,  
Unlike the deity my song invokes.  
I to day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,  
(Endymion's rival) and her aid implore,  
Now first implor'd in succour to the Muse.

Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's\* form,  
And modestly forego thine own! O thou  
Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire!  
Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song?  
As thou her crescent, she thy character  
Assumes, still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits who dare dispute  
This revolution in the world inspir'd?  
Ye train Pierian! to the lunar sphere,  
In silent hour, address your ardent call  
For aid immortal, less her brother's right.  
She with the spheres harmonious nightly leads

\* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,  
A strain for gods, deny'd to mortal ear.  
Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of Heav'n!  
What title or what name endears thee most?  
Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!—or dost hear  
With higher gust, fair Portland of the skies?  
Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,  
More powerful than of old Circean charm?  
Come, but from heavenly banquets with thee bring  
The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear  
The theft divine; or in propitious dreams  
(For dreams are thine) transfuse it through the  
breast

Of thy first votary—but not thy last,  
If, like thy namesake, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be, kind on such a theme;  
A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,  
Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!  
A theme that rose all pale, and told my soul  
'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;  
A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp  
Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.  
Narcissa follows ere his tomb is clos'd.  
Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;  
They love a train; they tread each other's heel;  
Her death invades his mournful right, and claims  
The grief that started from my lids for him;  
Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,  
Or shares it ere it falls. So frequent Death,  
Sorrow he more than causes; he confounds;  
For human sighs his rival strokes contend,  
And make distress distraction. Oh, Philander!

What was thy fate? a double fate to me;  
Portent and pain! a menace and a blow!  
Like the black raven hovering o'er my peace,  
Not less a bird of omen than of prey.  
It call'd Narcissa long before her hour;  
It call'd her tender soul by break of bliss,  
From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;  
Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves  
In this inclement clime of human life.

Sweet harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!  
And young as beautiful! and soft as young!  
And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!  
And happy (if aught happy here) as good!  
For Fortune fond, had built her nest on high.  
Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,  
'Transfix'd by Fate (who loves a lofty mark)  
How from the summit of the grove she fell,  
And left it unharmonious! all its charm  
Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!  
Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,  
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain  
(O to forget her!) thrilling through my heart!

Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy! this group  
Of bright ideas, flowers of Paradise,  
As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,  
Kneel, and present it to the skies, as all  
We guess of Heav'n; and these were all her own;  
And she was mine; and I was—was!—most blest—  
Gay title of the deepest misery!  
As bodies grow more pond'rous robb'd of life,  
Good lost weighs more in grief than gain'd in joy.  
Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by venal storm,

Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;  
And if in death still lovely, lovelier there,  
Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love.  
And will not the severe excuse a sigh?  
Scorn the proud man that is asham'd to weep.  
Our tears indulg'd indeed deserve our shame.  
Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me!

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,  
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight,  
And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,  
Pale Omen sat, and scatter'd fears around  
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze  
That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,  
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,  
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,  
And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun  
(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam,  
Denied his wonted succour; nor with more  
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells  
Of lilies; fairest lilies, not so fair!

Queen lilies! and ye painted populace  
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives!  
In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,  
And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,  
And outblush (mine excepted) every fair;  
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,  
Which often cropt your odours, incense meet  
To thought so pure! Ye lovely fugitives!  
Coëval race with man! for man you smile;  
Why not smile at him too? You share, indeed,  
His sudden pass; but not his constant pain.

So man is made, nought ministers delight

But what his glowing passions can engage;  
And glowing passions, bent on aught below,  
Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale;  
And anguish after rapture, how severe!  
Rapture? bold man! who tempts the wrath divine?  
By plucking fruit denied to mortal taste,  
While here presuming on the rights of Heav'n.  
For transport dost thou call on every hour,  
Lorenzo? At thy friend's expense be wise:  
Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;  
A broken reed at best; but oft a spear:  
On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.

Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her.—Thought  
repell'd,

Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe.  
Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!  
And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smil'd!  
And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-opening joys!  
And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliss complete!  
And on a foreign shore, where strangers wept!  
Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still,  
Strangers to kindness, wept. Their eyes let fall  
Inhuman tears; strange tears! that trickled down  
From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!  
A tenderness that call'd them more severe,  
In spite of Nature's soft persuasion steel'd:  
While Nature melted, Superstition rav'd;  
That mourn'd the dead, and this denied a grave.

Their sighs incens'd; sighs foreign to the will!  
Their will the tiger-suck'd outrag'd the storm:  
For, oh! the curs'd ungodliness of Zeal!  
While sinful flesh relented, spirit nurs'd

In blind Infallibility's embrace,  
The sainted spirit petrified the breast.  
Denied the charity of dust to spread  
O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.  
What could I do? what succour? what resource?  
With pious sacrilege a grave I stole;  
With impious piety that grave I wrong'd;  
Short in my duty, coward in my grief!  
More like her murderer than friend, I crept  
With soft-suspended step, and muffled deep  
In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.  
I whisper'd what should echo through their realms,  
Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the  
    skies.

Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,  
While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?  
Pardon necessity, blest shade! of grief  
And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;  
Half-execration mingled with my pray'r;  
Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd:  
Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;  
Stamp'd the curs'd soil; and with humanity  
(Denied Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.

Glows my resentment into guilt? what guilt  
Can equal violations of the dead?  
The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust  
Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!  
This heav'n-assum'd, majestic, robe of earth  
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse  
With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold.  
When every passion sleeps that can offend;  
When strikes us every motive that can melt;

When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,  
That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;  
Then! spleen to dust? the dust of innocence?  
An angel's dust!—This Lucifer transcends;  
When he contended for the patriarch's bones,  
'Twa's not the strife of malice, but of pride;  
The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race  
Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love,  
And uncreated, but for love divine;  
And but for love divine this moment lost,  
By Fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.  
Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things  
Most horrid! 'mid stupendous highly strange!  
Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs;  
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,  
And contumelious his humanity:  
What then his vengeance? Hear it not, ye Stars!  
And thou, pale Moon! turn paler at the sound,  
Man is to man the sorest, surest ill.  
A previous blast foretels the rising storm;  
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;  
Volcanos bellow ere they disembody;  
Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;  
And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:  
Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,  
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.  
Is this the flight of Fancy? would it were!  
Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but himself,  
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the Muse? and let the Muse be fir'd:  
Who not inflam'd when what he speaks he feels,

And in the nerve most tender, in his friends;  
Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;  
He felt the truths I sing, and I in him:  
But he nor I feel more. Past ills, Narcissa!  
Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!  
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;  
Pangs numerous as the numerous ills that swarm'd  
O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clustering there,  
Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,  
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.  
Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)  
How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?  
An aspic each, and all an hydra-woe.  
What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—  
Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?  
This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews,  
And each tear mourns its own distinct distress,  
And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands  
Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.  
A grief like this proprietors excludes!  
Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;  
They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs  
Far as the fatal Fame can wing her way,  
And turn the gayest thought of gayest age  
Down their right channel, through the vale of death.  
The vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale,  
Where Darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,  
With raven wing incumbent, waits the day  
(Dread day!) that interdicts all future change;  
That subterranean world, that land of ruin!  
Fit walk, Lorenzo! for proud human thought!  
There let my thought expatiate, and explore



Balsamic truths and healing sentiments,  
Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.  
For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,  
My soul! ' The fruits of dying friends survey;  
Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;  
Give death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;  
And labour that first palm of noble minds,  
A manly scorn of terror from the tomb.'  
This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave,  
As poets feign'd, from Ajax' streaming blood  
Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r,  
Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.  
And first, of dying friends; what fruit from these?  
It brings us more than triple aid; an aid  
To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,  
To damp our brainless ardours, and abate  
That glare of life which often blinds the wise.  
Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth  
Our rugged path to death; to break those bars  
Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws  
Cross our obstructed way, and thus to make  
Welcome, as safe, our port from every storm.  
Each friend by Fate snatch'd from us, is a plume  
Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,  
Which makes us stoop from our ærial heights,  
And damp'd with omen of our own disease,  
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,  
Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up,  
O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,  
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends  
Are angels sent on errands full of love;

For us they languish, and for us they die:  
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?  
Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,  
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?  
Shall we disdain their silent, soft, address,  
Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?  
Senseless as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,  
Tread under foot their agonies and groans,  
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;  
Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign,  
That kind chastiser of the soul, in joy!  
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,  
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast.  
Auspicious æra! golden days, begin!  
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.  
And why not think on death? Is life the theme  
Of every thought? and wish of every hour?  
And song of every joy? surprising truth!  
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.  
To wave the numerous ills that seize on life  
As their own property, their lawful prey;  
Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,  
His luxuries have left him no reserve,  
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights;  
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,  
And in the tasteless present chews the past;  
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.  
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years  
Have disinherited his future hours,  
Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.  
Live ever here, Lorenzo!—shocking thought!

So shocking, they who wish disown it too;  
Disown from shame what they from folly crave.  
Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?  
For what live ever here?—with labouring step  
To tread our former footsteps? pace the round  
Eternal? to climb life's worn heavy wheel,  
Which draws up nothing new? to beat, and beat,  
The beaten track? to bid each wretched day  
The former mock? to surfeit on the same,  
And yawn our joys? or thank a misery  
For change, though sad! to see what we have seen?  
Hear, till unheard, the same old slabber'd tale?  
To taste the tasted, and at each return  
Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant  
Another vintage? strain a flatter year  
Through loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?  
Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!  
Ill ground, and worse concocted! load, not life!  
The rational foul kennels of excess!  
Still streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch!  
Trembling each gulp, lest Death should snatch  
the bowl.

Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd!  
So would they have it: elegant desire!  
Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?  
But such examples might their riot awe.  
Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,  
(Though on bright thought they father all their  
flights)  
To what are they reduc'd? to love and hate  
The same vain world; to censure and espouse  
This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool

Each moment of each day; to flatter bad  
Through dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,  
Barren to them of good, and sharp with ills,  
And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,  
And infamous for wrecks of human hope—  
Scar'd at the gloomy gulf that yawns beneath.  
Such are their triumphs! such their pangs of joy!

'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.  
This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?  
One only, but that one what all may reach:  
Virtue—she, wonder-working goddess! charms  
That rock to bloom, and tames the painted shrew;  
And, what will more surprise, Lorenzo! gives  
To life's sick, nauseous iteration, change,  
And straightens Nature's circle to a line.  
Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo? lend an ear,  
A patient ear, thou'lt blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden iteration reigns,  
And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys  
Of sight, smell, taste. The cuckoo-seasons sing  
The small dull note to such as nothing prize  
But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,  
To doting sense indulge: but nobler minds,  
Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,  
Make their days various, various as the dyes  
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.  
On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,  
On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,  
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves  
In that for which they long, for which they live.  
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,  
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;

Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents  
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;  
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel  
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,  
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour,  
Advancing virtue in a line to bliss;  
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire!  
And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensure!

And shall we then, for virtue's sake, commence  
Apostates, and turn infidels for joy?  
A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust,  
'He sins against this life who slights the next.'  
What is this life? how few their favourite know?  
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,  
By passionately loving life we make  
Lov'd Life unlovely, hugging her to death.  
We give to time eternity's regard,  
And dreaming, take our passage for our port.  
Life has no value as an end, but means;  
An end deplorable! a means divine!  
When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;  
A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much.  
Like some fair humourists, life is most enjoy'd  
When courted least; most worth when disesteem'd;  
Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;  
In prospect richer far; important! awful!  
Not to be mention'd but with shouts of praise!  
Not to be thought on but with tides of joy!  
The mighty basis of eternal bliss!

Where now the barren rock? the painted shrew?  
Where now, Lorenzo, life's eternal round?  
Have I not made my triple promise good?

Vain is the world, but only to the vain.  
To what compare we then this varying scene,  
Whose worth, ambiguous, rises and declines,  
Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious Night  
Assists me here) compare it to the moon:  
Dark in herself, and indigent; but rich  
In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.  
When gross guilt interposes, labouring earth,  
O'ershadow'd mourns a deep eclipse of joy;  
Her joys, at brightest, pallid to that font  
Of full effulgent glory whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant. Oh, Lorenzo!  
A good man and an angel! these between  
How thin the barrier? what divides their fate?  
Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year;  
Or if an age, it is a moment still;  
A moment, or eternity's forgot.  
Then be what once they were who now are gods;  
Be what Philander was, and claim the skies.  
Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass?  
The soft transition call it, and be cheer'd:  
Such it is often, and why not to thee?  
To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,  
And may itself procure what it presumes.  
Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduc'd;  
Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.  
'Strange competition!'—True, Lorenzo! strange!  
So little life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,  
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.  
Through chinks, styl'd organs, dim life peeps at  
light;

Death bursts the' involving cloud, and all is day:  
All eye, all ear, the disembodied power.  
Death has feign'd evils nature shall not feel;  
Life, ills substantial wisdom cannot shun.  
Is not the mighty mind, that sun of Heav'n,  
By tyrant Life dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?  
By death enlarg'd, ennobled, deified?  
Death but entombs the body, life the soul.

‘ Is Death then guiltless? how he marks his way  
With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!  
Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!  
With various lustres these light up the world,  
Which death puts out, and darkens human race.’  
I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:  
The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!  
Death humbles these; more barbarous Life, the  
man.

Life is the triumph of our mouldering clay;  
Death of the spirit infinite! divine!  
Death has no dread but what frail life imparts,  
Nor life true joy but what kind death improves.  
No bliss has life to boast, till death can give  
Far greater. Life's a debtor to the grave;  
Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life  
Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,  
To cater for the sense, and serve at boards  
Where every ranger of the wilds, perhaps  
Each reptile, justly claims our upper-hand.  
Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,  
In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd!  
Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death

Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,  
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,  
And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,  
And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.  
What need I more?—O Death! the palm is thine.

Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,  
Age and disease; Disease, though long my guest,  
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life,  
Which pluck'd a little more will toll the bell  
That calls my few friends to my funeral;  
Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,  
While Reason and Religion, better taught,  
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb  
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory;  
It binds in chains the raging ills of life:  
Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,  
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.  
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,  
Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine.  
Our day of dissolution!—name it right,  
'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harvest, rich  
And ripe. What though the sickle, sometimes  
keen,

Just scars us as we reap the golden grain;  
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.  
Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,  
Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays  
For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!  
But, O! the last the former so transcends,  
Life dies compar'd; Life lives beyond the grave.

And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?  
Death! the great counsellor, who man inspires



With every nobler thought and fairer deed!  
Death! the deliverer, who rescues man!  
Death! the rewarder, who the rescued crowns!  
Death! that absolves my birth, a curse without it!  
Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,  
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!  
Death! of all pain the period, not of joy;  
Joy's source and subject still subsist unhurt;  
One in my soul, and one in her great sire,  
Though the four winds were warring for my dust.  
Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,  
Though prison'd there, my dust, too, I reclaim,  
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest  
spheres)

And live entire. Death is the crown of life:  
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain:  
Were death denied, to live would not be life:  
Were death denied, ev'n fools would wish to die.  
Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign!  
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,  
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.  
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost:  
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.  
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?  
When shall I die?—when shall I live for ever?

END OF NIGHT THIRD.

THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT IV.*

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THE  
**CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.**

CONTAINING  
THE ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH, AND PROPER SENTIMENTS OF  
HEART ON THAT INESTIMABLE BLESSING.

---

INSCRIBED TO  
*THE HONOURABLE MR. YORKE.*

---

**A** MUCH-INDEBTED muse, O Yorke! intrudes.  
Amid the smiles of fortune and of youth,  
Thine ear is patient of a serious song.  
How deep implanted in the breast of man  
The dread of death? I sing its sovereign cure.  
Why start at Death? where is he? Death arriv'd,  
Is past; not come, or gone; he's never here.  
Ere hope, sensation fails. Black-boding man  
Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow.  
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;

'The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;  
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,  
The terrors of the living, not the dead;  
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch.  
Man makes a death which Nature never made,  
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,  
And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.

But were Death frightful, what has age to fear?  
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,  
And shelter in his hospitable gloom.  
I scarce can meet a monument but holds  
My younger; every date cries—'Come away.'  
And what recalls me? look the world around,  
And tell me what. The wisest cannot tell.  
Should any born of woman give his thought  
Full range on just Dislike's unbounded field;  
Of things the vanity, of men the flaws;  
Flaws in the best; the many flaw all o'er;  
As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark;  
Vivacious ill; good dying immature;  
(How immature Narcissa's marble tells)  
And at its death bequeathing endless pain;  
His heart, though bold, would sicken at the sight,  
And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant  
To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;  
A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,  
Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,  
But from our comment on the comedy,  
Pleasing reflections on parts well-sustain'd,  
Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,  
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,

When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,  
Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,  
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

With me that time is come; my world is dead;  
A new world rises, and new manners reign.  
Foreign comedians, a spruce band, arrive  
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.  
What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,  
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;  
Nor that the worst. Ah me! the dire effect  
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long.  
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)  
My very master knows me not.—

Shall I dare say peculiar is the fate?  
I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot.  
An object ever pressing dims the sight,  
And hides behind its ardour to be seen.  
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,  
They drink it as the nectar of the great,  
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.  
Refusal! can'st thou wear a smother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.  
Who cheapens life abates the fear of death.  
Twice-told the period spent on stubborn Troy,  
Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege;  
Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich.  
Alas! ambition makes my little less,  
Embittering the possess'd. Why wish for more?  
Wishing, of all employments is the worst;  
Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay!  
Were I as plump as stall'd Theology,  
Wishing would waste me to this shade again.

Were I as wealthy as a South-Sea dream,  
Wishing is an expedient to be poor.  
Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool,  
Caught at a court, purg'd off by purer air,  
And simpler diet, gifts of rural life!

Blest be that hand divine which gently laid  
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.  
The world's a stately bark, on dangerous seas  
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril:  
Here on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,  
I hear the tumult of the distant throng  
As that of seas remote, or dying storms,  
And meditate on scenes more silent still,  
Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.  
Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,  
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,  
Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see;  
I see the circling hunt of noisy men  
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,  
Pursuing and pursu'd, each other's prey;  
As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles,  
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?  
What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?  
Earth's highest station ends in, 'Here he lies;'  
And 'dust to dust,' concludes her noblest song.  
If this song lives, posterity shall know  
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late,  
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme  
For future vacancies in church or state,  
Some avocation deeming it—to die;

Unbit by rage canine of dying rich,  
Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of Hell.

O my coëvals! remnants of yourselves!  
Poor human ruins tottering o'er the grave!  
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,  
Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,  
Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?  
Shall our pale wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,  
Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age?  
With avarice and convulsions, grasping hard?  
Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?  
Man wants but little, nor that little long:  
How soon must he resign his very dust,  
Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour!  
Years unexperienc'd rush on numerous ills:  
And soon as man, expert from time, has found  
The key of life, it opens the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look, 2  
And miss such numbers, numbers too, of such  
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,  
And stricter on their guard, and fitter far  
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe  
I still survive. And am I fond of life,  
Who scarce can think it possible I live?  
Alive by miracle! or, what is next,  
Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,  
Who long have buried what gives life to live,  
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.  
Life's lee is not more shallow than impure  
And vapid: Sense and Reason show the door,  
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbiter of life and death!

Nature's immortal, immaterial sun!  
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth  
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay  
The worm's inferior; and, in rank, beneath  
The dust I tread on; high to bear my brow,  
To drink the spirit of the golden day,  
And triumph in existence, and couldst know  
No motive but my bliss, and hast ordain'd  
A rise in blessing! with the patriarch's joy  
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;  
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust:  
Or life or death is equal; neither weighs;  
All weight in this—O let me live to thee!

Though Nature's terrors, thus, may be repress,  
Still frowns grim Death; guilt points the tyrant's  
spear.

And whence all human guilt? From death forgot.  
Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarm  
Of friendly warnings which around me flew,  
And smil'd unsmitten. Small my cause to smile!  
Death's admonitions, like shafts upward shot,  
More dreadful by delay, the longer ere  
They strike our hearts the deeper is their wound:  
O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it stings;  
Who can appease its anguish? How it burns!  
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd thought can  
draw!

What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,  
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb?

With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see:  
Ah! too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.  
On high?—what means my frenzy? I blaspheme:

Alas! how low? how far beneath the skies?  
The skies it form'd, and now it bleeds for me—  
But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;  
Draw the dire steel—ah, no! the dreadful blessing,  
What heart or can sustain or dares forego?  
There hangs all human hope; that nail supports  
The falling universe: that gone, we drop;  
Horror receives us, and the dismal wish  
Creation had been smother'd in her birth—  
Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust,  
When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne;  
In Heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell?  
O what a groan was there! a groan not his:  
He seiz'd our dreadful right, the load sustain'd,  
And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world.  
A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too  
dear;

Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise,  
Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.

O for their song to reach my lofty theme!  
Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres,  
Much rather thou, who dost these spheres inspire!  
Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,  
And show to men the dignity of man,  
Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.  
Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,  
And Christian languish? On our hearts, not heads,  
Fall the foul infamy. My heart, awake:  
What can awake thee, unawak'd by this,  
'Expended Deity on human weal?'  
Feel the great truths which burst the tenfold night  
Of Heathen error with a golden flood



Of endless day. To feel is to be fir'd;  
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel.

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Power!  
Still more tremendous for thy wondrous love!  
That arms with awe more awful thy commands,  
And foul transgression dips in sev'nfold night;  
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense!  
In love immense, inviolably just!  
Thou, rather than thy justice should be stain'd,  
Didst stain the cross; and, work of wonders far  
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.

Bold thought! shall I dare speak it, or repress?  
Should man more execrate or boast the guilt  
Which rous'd such vengeance; which such love  
infram'd? .

O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outstretch'd  
arms

Stern Justice and soft-smiling Love, embrace,  
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,  
When seem'd its majesty to need support,  
Or that, or man, inevitably lost:  
What but the fathomless of thought divine  
Could labour such expedient from despair,  
And rescue both? Both rescue! both exalt!  
O how are both exalted by the deed!  
The wondrous deed! or shall I call it more?  
A wonder in Omnipotence itself!  
A mystery no less to gods than men!

Not thus our infidels the' Eternal draw,  
A God all-o'er consummate, absolute,  
Full-orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:  
They set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes,

And with one excellence another wound;  
Maim Heaven's perfection, break its equal beams,  
Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,  
Undeify'd by their opprobrious praise:  
A God all mercy is a God unjust.

Ye brainless wits! ye baptiz'd infidels!  
Ye worse for mending! wash'd to fouler stains!  
The ransom was paid down; the fund of Heav'n,  
Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,  
Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,  
All price beyond: though curious to compute,  
Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum:  
Its value vast, ungrasp'd by minds create,  
For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.

And was the ransom paid? it was; and paid  
(What can exalt the bounty more?) for you.  
The sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene  
Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;  
Not such as this, not such as Nature makes;  
A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold;  
A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without  
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown!  
Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start  
At that enormous load of human guilt  
Which bow'd his blessed head, o'erwhelm'd his  
cross,  
Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb  
With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead?  
Hell howl'd; and Heav'n that hour let fall a tear:  
Heav'n wept, that men might smile! Heav'n bled,  
that man  
Might never die!——

And is devotion virtue? 'tis compell'd.  
What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these?  
Such contemplations mount us, and should mount  
The mind still higher, nor ever glance on man  
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd.—Where roll my thoughts  
To rest from wonders? other wonders rise,  
And strike where'er they roll: my soul is caught:  
Heaven's sovereign blessings clustering from the  
cross,

Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,  
The prisoner of amaze!—In his blest life  
I see the path, and in his death the price,  
And in his great ascent the proof supreme  
Of immortality.—And did he rise?  
Hear, O ye Nations! hear it, O ye Dead!  
He rose, he rose! he burst the bars of death.  
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates,  
And give the King of Glory to come in.  
Who is the King of Glory? he who left  
His throne of glory for the pang of death!  
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!  
And give the King of Glory to come in.  
Who is the King of Glory? he who slew  
The ravenous foe that gorg'd all human race!  
The King of Glory he, whose glory fill'd  
Heav'n with amazement at his love to man,  
And with divine complacency beheld  
Pow'rs most illumin'd wilder'd in the theme.

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?  
Oh, the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd  
throne!

Last gasp of vanquish'd Death. Shout, earth and  
Heav'n,

This sum of good to man! whose nature then  
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.  
Then, then, I rose; then first Humanity  
Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,  
(Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth,  
Seiz'd in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous  
To call man mortal. Man's mortality  
Was then transferr'd to death; and Heaven's  
duration

Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,  
This child of dust.—Man, all-immortal! hail;  
Hail, Heav'n, all lavish of strange gifts to man!  
Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss.

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,  
On Christian joy's exulting wing, above  
The' Aonian mount!—Alas! small cause for joy!  
What if to pain immortal? if extent  
Of being, to preclude a close of woe?  
Where, then, my boast of immortality?  
I boast it still, though cover'd o'er with guilt:  
For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd;  
'Tis guilt alone can justify his death;  
Nor that, unless his death can justify  
Relenting guilt in Heaven's indulgent sight.  
If, sick of folly, I relent, he writes  
My name in Heav'n with that inverted spear  
(A spear deep-dipt in blood!) which pierc'd his side,  
And open'd there a font for all mankind  
Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:  
This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

And what is this?—Survey the wondrous cure,  
And at each step let higher wonder rise!  
' Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon

Through means that speak its value infinite!  
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!  
With blood divine of him I made my foe!  
Persisted to provoke! though woo'd and aw'd;  
Blest, and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still!  
A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne!  
Nor I alone! a rebel universe!  
My species up in arms! not one exempt!  
Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies,  
Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt!  
As if our race were held of highest rank,  
And Godhead dearer as more kind to man!

Bound, every heart! and every bosom burn!  
O what a scale of miracles is here!  
Its lowest round high planted on the skies;  
Its towering summit lost beyond the thought  
Of man or angel! Oh that I could climb  
The wonderful ascent with equal praise!  
Praise! flow for ever, (if astonishment  
Will give thee leave) my praise! for ever flow;  
Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heav'n  
More fragrant than Arabia sacrific'd,  
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heav'n, shall Praise descend  
With her soft plume (from plausible angels' wing  
First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,  
Thus diving in the pockets of the great?  
Is praise the perquisite of every paw,  
Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold?  
Oh love of gold! thou meanest of amours!  
Shall praise her odours waste on virtues dead,  
Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,

Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,  
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,  
A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts,  
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect  
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones  
Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!  
Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,  
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme.

There flow redundant, like Meander flow,  
Back to thy fountain, to that parent Pow'r  
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,  
The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,  
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,  
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,  
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,  
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing,  
To prostrate angels an amazing scene!  
O the presumption of man's awe for man!—  
Man's Author! End! Restorer! Law! and Judge!  
Thine all! Day thine, and thine this gloom of Night,  
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds.  
What night eternal, but a frown from thee?  
What Heaven's meridian glory but thy smile?  
And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,  
While Heaven's high host on hallelujahs live?

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe  
My soul in praise to HIM who gave my soul,  
And all her infinite of prospect fair,  
Cut through the shades of hell, great Love! by thee,  
Oh most adorable! most unador'd!  
Where shall that praise begin which ne'er should  
end?

Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause?  
How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er,  
How richly wrought with attributes divine!  
What wisdom shines! what love! This midnight  
pomp,

This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid!  
Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;  
For others this profusion. Thou apart,  
Above, beyond! Oh tell me, mighty Mind,  
Where art thou? Shall I dive into the deep?  
Call to the sun? or ask the roaring winds  
For their Creator? shall I question loud  
The thunder, if in that the' Almighty dwells?  
Or holds he furious storms in straiten'd reins,  
And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?

What mean these questions!—Trembling I re-  
tract;

My prostrate soul adores the present God.  
Praise I a distant Deity? He tunes  
My voice (if tun'd;) the nerve that writes sustains:  
Wrapp'd in his being I resound his praise:  
But though past all diffus'd, without a shore  
His essence, local is his throne (as meet)  
To gather the dispers'd (as standards call  
The listed from afar;) to fix a point,  
A central point, collective of his sons,  
Since finite every nature but his own.

The nameless He, whose nod is Nature's birth,  
And Nature's shield the shadow of his hand;  
Her dissolution his suspended smile!  
The great First-Last! pavilion'd high he sits  
In darkness, from excessive splendour borne,

By gods unseen, unless through lustre lost.  
His glory, to created glory, bright,  
As that to central horrors: he looks down  
On all that soars, and spans immensity.

Though night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,  
Boundless Creation! what art thou? a beam,  
A mere effluvium of his majesty.

And shall an atom of this atom-world  
Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of Heav'n?  
Down to the centre should I send my thought  
Through beds of glittering ore and glowing gems,  
Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;  
Goes out in darkness: if, on towering wing,  
I send it through the boundless vault of stars,  
(The stars, though rich, what dross their gold to  
thee,

Great! good! wise! wonderful! eternal King!)  
If to those conscious stars thy throne around,  
Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss,  
And ask their strain; they want it, more they want,  
Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,  
Languid their energy, their ardour cold;  
Indebted still, their highest rapture burns,  
Short of its mark, defective though divine.

Still more—this theme is man's, and man's alone;  
Their vast appointments reach it not; they see  
On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high,  
And downward look for Heaven's superior praise!  
First-born of Ether! high in fields of light!  
View man, to see the glory of your God!  
Could angels envy, they had envied here:  
And some did envy; and the rest, though gods,



Yet still gods unredeem'd (there triumphs man,  
Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)  
They less would feel though more adorn my theme.  
They sung creation (for in that they shar'd)  
How rose in melody that child of Love!  
Creation's great superior, man! is thine;  
Thine is redemption; they just gave the key;  
'Tis thine to raise and eternize the song,  
Though human, yet divine; for should not this  
Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?  
Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime;  
Redemption! 'twas the labour of the skies;  
Far more than labour—it was death in Heav'n.  
A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,  
If not far bolder still to disbelieve.

Here pause and ponder. Was there death in  
Heav'n?

What then on earth? on earth, which struck the  
blow?

Who struck it? Who?—O how is man enlarg'd,  
Seen through this medium! How the pigmy tow'rs!  
How counterpois'd his origin from dust!  
How counterpois'd to dust his sad return!  
How voided his vast distance from the skies!  
How near he presses on the seraph's wing!  
Which is the seraph? Which the born of clay?  
How this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud  
Of guilt and clay condens'd, the son of Heav'n!  
The double son; the made, and the re-made!  
And shall Heaven's double property be lost?  
Man's double madness only can destroy.  
To man the bleeding Cross has promis'd all;

The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace.  
Who gave his life, what grace shall he deny?  
O ye, who from this rock of ages leap  
Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep!  
What cordial joy, what consolation strong,  
Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,  
Our interest's in the Master of the storm!  
Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruin smile,  
While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

Man, know thyself: all wisdom centres there.  
To none man seems ignoble but to man.  
Angels that grandeur, men o'erlook, admire:  
How long shall human nature be their book,  
Degenerate mortal! and unread by thee?  
The beam dim reason sheds shows wonders there:  
What high contents! illustrious faculties!  
But the grand comment, which displays at full  
Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,  
By Heav'n compos'd, was publish'd on the cross.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself  
An awful stranger, a terrestrial God?  
A glorious partner with the Deity  
In that high attribute, immortal life?  
If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm.  
I gaze, and as I gaze my mounting soul  
Catches strange fire, Eternity! at thee,  
And drops the world—or, rather, more enjoys.  
How chang'd the face of Nature! how improv'd!  
What seem'd a chaos shines a glorious world,  
Or, what a world, an Eden! heighten'd all!  
It is another scene! another self!  
And still another, as time rolls along,

And that a self far more illustrious still.  
Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades  
Unpierc'd by bold Conjecture's keenest ray,  
What evolutions of surprising Fate!  
How Nature opens, and receives my soul  
In boundless walks of raptur'd thought! where gods  
Encounter and embrace me! What new births  
Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun,  
Where what now charms, perhaps whate'er exists,  
Old time, and fair creation, are forgot!

Is this extravagant? Of man we form  
Extravagant conception to be just:  
Conception unconfined wants wings to reach him;  
Beyond its reach the Godhead only more.  
He, the great Father! kindled at one flame  
The world of rationals; one spirit pour'd  
From spirits' awful Fountain; pour'd himself  
Through all their souls, but not in equal stream,  
Profuse, or frugal of the' inspiring God,  
As his wise plan demanded; and when past  
Their various trials, in their various spheres,  
If they continue rational, as made,  
Resorbs them all into himself again,  
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,  
Though yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold?  
Angels are men of a superior kind;  
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,  
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight;  
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,  
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,  
And slippery step, the bottom of the steep.

Angels their failings, mortals have their praise:  
While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,  
And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,  
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.  
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,  
Yet absent; but not absent from their love.  
Michael has fought our battles; Raphael sung  
Our triumphs; Gabriel on our errands flown,  
Sent by the Sovereign: and are these, O Man,  
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn  
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies  
To wretched man, the goddess in her left  
Holds out this world, and in her right the next.  
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;  
Supporter sole of man above himself;  
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,  
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.  
Religion! Providence! an after-state!  
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;  
This can support us; all is sea besides;  
Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.  
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,  
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,  
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,  
And dungeon-horrors, by kind Fate discharg'd,  
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure  
Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise,  
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,  
As if new-born he triumphs in the change;  
So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims

And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth  
Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts  
To Reason's region, her own element,  
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness,  
And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there shine  
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;  
There sacred violence assaults the soul;  
There nothing but compulsion is forborne.  
Can love allure us? or can terror awe?  
He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun.  
He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.  
If in his love so terrible, what then  
His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire;  
Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires?  
Can pray'r, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my all!  
My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!  
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!  
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!  
My light in darkness! and my life in death!  
My boast through time! bliss through eternity!  
Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,  
Or fathom thy profound of love to man!  
To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me;  
My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these!

What then art Thou? By what name shall I call  
thee?

Knew I the name devout archangels use,  
Devout archangels should the name enjoy,  
By me unrivall'd; thousands more sublime,  
None half so dear as that which, though unspoke,  
Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotence

Is lost in love! thou great Philanthropist!  
Father of angels! but the friend of man!  
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!  
Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand  
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!  
How art thou pleas'd by bounty to distress!  
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,  
Too big for birth! to favour and confound;  
To challenge, and to distance all return!  
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,  
And leave Praise panting in the distant vale!  
Thy right, too great, defrauds thee of thy due;  
And sacrilegious our sublimest song.  
But since the naked will obtains thy smile,  
Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,  
And future life symphonious to my strain,  
(That noblest hymn to Heav'n!) for ever lie  
Entomb'd by fear of death! and every fear,  
The dread of every evil, but thy frown.

Whom see I yonder so demurely smile?  
Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.  
Ye Quietists! in homage to the skies!  
Serene! of soft address! who mildly make  
An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,  
Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,  
But, for the blessing, wrestle not with Heav'n!  
Think you my song too turbulent? too warm?  
Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?  
Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd  
To touch things sacred? Oh for warmer still!  
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'rs:  
Oh for an humbler heart and prouder song!

Thou, my much-injur'd Theme, with that soft eye  
Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look  
Compassion to the coldness of my breast,  
And pardon to the winter in my strain.

Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, Formalists!  
On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm:  
Passion is reason, transport temper here.  
Shall Heav'n, which gave us ardour, and has shown  
Her own for man so strongly, not disdain  
What smooth emollients in theology,  
Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors preach,  
That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?  
Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd?  
Devotion when lukewarm is undevout;  
But when it glows, its heat is struck to Heav'n;  
To human hearts her golden harps are strung;  
High Heav'n's orchestra chaunts Amen to man.

Hear I, or dream I hear, their distant strain,  
Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of Heav'n,  
Soft wafted on celestial Pity's plume,  
Through the vast spaces of the universe,  
To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?  
Oh when will death (now stingless) like a friend  
Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death  
This mouldering, old, partition-wall throw down?  
Give beings, one in nature, one abode?  
Oh Death divine! that giv'st us to the skies:  
Great future! glorious patron of the past  
And present, when shall I thy shrine adore?  
From Nature's continent, immensely wide,  
Immensely blest, this little isle of life,  
This dark incarcerating colony

Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain!  
That manumits; that calls from exile home;  
That leads to Nature's great metropolis,  
And re-admits us, through the guardian hand  
Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne,  
Who hears our Advocate, and, through his wounds  
Beholding man, allows that tender name.  
'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command;  
'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise.  
'Tis impious in a good man to be sad.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! where hangs all our hope?  
Touch'd by the cross we live, or more than die;  
That touch which touch'd not angels; more divine  
Than that which touch'd confusion into form,  
And darkness into glory: partial touch!  
Ineffably pre-eminent regard!  
Sacred to man, and sovereign through the whole  
Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs  
From Heav'n through all duration, and supports,  
In one illustrious and amazing plan,  
Thy welfare, Nature! and thy God's renown.  
That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul  
Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,  
Turns earth to Heav'n, to heav'nly thrones trans-  
forms

The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb.

Dost ask me when? When he who died returns;  
Returns, how chang'd! where then the man of woe?  
In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,  
And all his courts, exhausted by the tide  
Of deities triumphant in his train,  
Leave a stupendous solitude in Heaven;



Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase  
Of pomp and multitude; a radiant band  
Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.

Is this by fancy thrown remote? and rise  
Dark doubts between the promise and event?  
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;  
Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;  
Nature is Christian; preaches to mankind,  
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.  
Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?  
The' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds  
On gazing nations from his fiery train,  
Of length enormous, takes his ample round  
Through depths of ether; coasts unnumber'd worlds  
Of more than solar glory; doubles wide  
Heaven's mighty cape; and then revisits earth,  
From the long travel of a thousand years.  
Thus at the destin'd period shall return  
He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze,  
And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point,  
Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes:  
Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,  
But turn, and dart into the dark again.  
Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,  
To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,  
And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore.  
Death's terror is the mountain Faith removes,  
That mountain-barrier between man and peace.  
'Tis Faith disarms Destruction, and absolves,  
From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—' Reason bids,

All-sacred Reason.—Hold her sacred still;  
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame:  
All-sacred Reason! source and soul of all  
Demanding praise on earth, or earth above!  
My heart is thine: deep in its inmost folds  
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.  
Wear I the blessed cross, by Fortune stamp'd  
On passive Nature before Thought was born?  
My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!  
No; Reason re-baptiz'd me when adult;  
Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale;  
My heart became the convert of my head,  
And made that choice which once was but my fate.  
'On argument alone my faith is built:'

Reason pursu'd is Faith; and unpursued,  
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:  
And such our proof, that, or our Faith is right,  
Or Reason lies, and Heav'n design'd it wrong.  
Absolve we this? what then is blasphemy?

Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,  
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;  
'The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.  
Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower:  
The fading flower shall die, but Reason lives  
Immortal, as her Father in the skies,  
When faith is virtue, reason makes it so.  
Wrong not the Christian: think not reason yours;  
'Tis reason our great Master holds so dear;  
'Tis reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents;  
'Tis reason's voice obey'd his glories crown:  
To give lost reason life, he pour'd his own.  
Believe, and show the reason of a man;

Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;  
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.  
Through reason's wounds alone thy faith can die;  
Which dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,  
And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due  
To those who push our antidote aside;  
Those boasted friends to reason and to man,  
Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves  
Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart.  
These pompous sons of reason idoliz'd,  
And vilified at once; of reason dead,  
Then deified, as monarchs were of old;  
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?  
While love of truth through all their camp resounds,  
They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,  
Spike up their inch of reason on the point  
Of philosophic wit, call'd Argument,  
And then exulting in their taper, cry,  
' Behold the sun;' and, Indian-like, adore.

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!  
Thou Maker of new morals to mankind!  
The grand morality is love of Thee.  
As wise as Socrates, if such they were,  
(Nor will they 'bate of that sublime renown)  
As wise as Socrates might justly stand  
The definition of a modern fool.

A Christian is the highest style of man.  
And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,  
As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow?  
If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:  
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,

More struck with grief or wonder, who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye citizens of earth!  
(For such alone the Christian banner fly)  
Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?  
Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:  
'He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,  
And says he call'd another; that arrives,  
Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on;  
Till one calls him, who varies not his call,  
But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,  
Till nature dies, and Judgment sets him free;  
A freedom far less welcome than his chain.'

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;  
Add to life's highest prize her latest hour;  
That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,  
That, like a post, comes on in full career.  
How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud!  
Where is the fable of thy former years?  
Thrown down the gulf of time; as far from thee  
As they had ne'er been thine; the day in hand,  
Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;  
Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone;  
And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd  
By strides as swift. Eternity is all;  
And whose eternity? who triumphs there?  
Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!  
For ever basking in the Deity!  
Lorenzo! who?—thy conscience shall reply.

O give it leave to speak; 'twill speak ere long,  
Thy leave unask'd: Lorenzo! hear it now,  
While useful its advice, its accent mild.  
By the great edict, the divine decree,

Truth is deposited with man's last hour;  
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust;  
Truth! eldest daughter of the Deity!  
Truth! of his council when he made the worlds?  
Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made;  
Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,  
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,  
That Heav'n-commission'd hour no sooner calls,  
But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,  
Like him they fable under Ætna whelm'd,  
The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,  
Loudly convinces, and severely pains.  
Dark demons I discharge, and hydra-stings;  
The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell;  
Just definition! though by schools untaught.  
Ye deaf to truth, peruse this parson'd page,  
And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest:—  
' Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.'

END OF NIGHT FOURTH.

THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT V.*

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THE RELAPSE.

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TO THE  
*RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.*

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**L**ORENZO! to recriminate is just.  
Fondness of fame is avarice of air.  
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise:  
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who sought no more.  
As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse  
Has often blush'd at her degenerate sons,  
Retain'd by sense to plead her filthy cause,  
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,  
And subtilize the gross into refin'd;  
As if to magic numbers' powerful charm  
'Twas given to make a civet of their song  
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.  
Wit, a true pagan, deifies the brute,

And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.

The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.

We wear the chains of pleasure and of pride:  
These share the man, and these distract him too;  
Draw different ways, and clash in their commands.

Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars;

But Pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground.

Joys shar'd by brute-creation Pride resents;

Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy,

And both at once: a point how hard to gain!

But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire?

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprize.

Since joys of sense can't rise to Reason's taste,

In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge

Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops

To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.

Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose;

Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl:

A thousand phantoms and a thousand spells,

A thousand opiates scatters to delude,

To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,

And the fool'd mind delightfully confound.

Thus that which shock'd the judgment, shocks no  
more:

That which gave Pride offence, no more offends.

Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,

At war eternal, which in man shall reign,

By Wit's address patch up a fatal peace,

And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,

From rank refin'd to delicate and gay.

Art, cursed Art! wipes off the' indebted blush

From Nature's cheek, and bronzes every shame.

Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,  
And infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,  
These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend.  
The flow'rs of eloquence, profusely pour'd  
O'er spotted Vice, fill half the letter'd world.  
Can pow'rs of genius exorcise their page,  
And consecrate enormities with song?

But let not these inexpressible strains  
Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity,  
Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world  
As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point,  
A point in her esteem, from whence to start,  
And run the round of universal space,  
To visit being universal there,  
And being's Source, that utmost flight of mind!  
Yet spite of this so vast circumference,  
Well knows but what is moral nought is great.  
Sing sirens only? do not angels sing?  
There is in Poësy a decent pride,  
Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose.  
Her younger sister, haply not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo! to find pastimes here?  
No guilty passion blown into a flame,  
No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,  
No fairy field of fiction, all on flow'r,  
No rainbow-colours here, or silken tale;  
But solemn counsels, images of awe,  
Truths which Eternity lets fall on man,  
With double weight, through these revolving  
spheres,  
This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade:



Thoughts such as shall revisit your last hour,  
Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires;  
And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still  
In melancholy dipp'd, imbrowns the whole.

Yet this, ev'n this, my laughter-loving friends;  
Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile!  
If what imports you most can most engage,  
Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.  
Or if you fail me, know the wise shall taste  
The truths I sing; the truth I sing shall feel;  
And feeling, give assent; and their assent  
Is ample recompense; is more than praise.  
But chiefly thine, O Litchfield! nor mistake;  
Think not un introduc'd I force my way:  
Narcissa, not unknown, not unallied  
By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth!  
To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,  
Where all the language harmony, descends  
Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse:  
A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise:  
Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.

O thou, bless'd Spirit! whether the Supreme,  
Great antemundane Father! in whose breast  
Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,  
And all its various revolutions roll'd  
Present, though future, prior to themselves;  
Whose breath can blow it into nought again,  
Or from his throne some delegated pow'r,  
Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought  
From vain and vile to solid and sublime!  
Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts  
Of inspiration, from a purer stream,

And fuller of the God than that which burst  
From fam'd Castalia; nor is yet allay'd  
My sacred thirst, though long my soul has rang'd  
Through pleasing paths of moral and divine,  
By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars,

By them best lighted are the paths of thought;  
Nights are their days, their most illumin'd hours.  
By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career,  
Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,  
Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.  
By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts  
Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.  
By night, from objects free, from passion cool,  
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpress'd, the births  
Of pure election, arbitrary range,  
Not to the limits of one world confin'd,  
But from ethereal travels light on earth,  
As voyagers drop anchor for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond  
Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore;  
Darkness has more divinity for me;  
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul  
To settle on herself, our point supreme!  
There lies our theatre; there sits our judge.  
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;  
'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out  
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign,  
And Virtue's too: these tutelary shades  
Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.  
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too:  
It no less rescues virtue than inspires.

Virtue, for ever frail as fair below,

Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,  
Nor touches on the world without a stain.  
The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,  
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.  
Something we thought is blotted; we resolv'd,  
Is shaken; we renounc'd, returns again.  
Each salutation may slide in a sin  
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.  
Nor is it strange; light, motion, concourse, noise,  
All scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,  
Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off  
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,  
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,  
And acts with double force, by few repell'd.  
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain  
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast:  
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe,  
And inhumanity is caught from man,  
From smiling man! A slight, a single glance,  
And shot at random, often has brought home  
A sudden fever to the throbbing heart  
Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.  
We see, we hear, with peril; Safety dwells  
Remote from multitude. The world's a school  
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around!  
We must or imitate or disapprove;  
Must list as their accomplices or foes:  
That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.  
From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit  
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade.  
This sacred shade, and solitude, what is it?

'Tis the felt presence of the Deity.  
Few are the faults we flatter when alone;  
Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,  
And looks, like other objects, black by night.  
By night an atheist half believes a God.

Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.  
The conscious Moon, through every distant age,  
Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall,  
On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray.  
The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from Heav'n  
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,  
And form their manners, not inflame their pride,  
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest  
His labouring mind, the stars in silence slide,  
And seem all gazing on their future guest,  
See him soliciting his ardent suit  
In private audience; all the live-long night,  
Rigid in thought, and motionless he stands,  
Nor quits his theme or posture till the sun  
(Rude drunkard! rising rosy from the main)  
Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,  
And gives him to the tumult of the world.  
Hail, precious moments! stol'n from the black waste  
Of murder'd time! auspicious Midnight! hail!  
The world excluded, every passion hush'd,  
And open'd a calm intercourse with Heav'n,  
Here the soul sits in council, ponders past,  
Predestines future action; sees, not feels,  
Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm,  
All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!  
I am not pent in darkness; rather say

(If not too bold) in darkness I'm imbower'd.  
Delightful gloom! the clustering thoughts around  
Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade,  
But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.  
Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first  
fire,

Fountain of animation! whence descends  
Urania, my celestial guest! who deigns  
Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now,  
Conscious how needful discipline to man,  
From pleasing dalliance with the charms of Night,  
My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites  
Far other beat of heart—Narcissa's tomb.

Or is it feeble Nature calls me back,  
And breaks my spirit into grief again?  
Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?  
A cold slow puddle creeping through my veins?  
Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all.  
What are we? how unequal! now we soar,  
And now we sink. To be the same transcends  
Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul  
For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.  
Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds  
The blush of weakness to the bane of woe.  
The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate  
In this damp, dusky region, charg'd with storms,  
But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;  
Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall:  
Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;  
And not to yield, though beaten, all our praise.

'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.  
Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,

Experience damps our triumph. I, who late  
Emerging from the shadows of the grave,  
Where grief detain'd me prisoner, mounting high,  
'Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,  
And call'd mankind to glory, shook off pain,  
Mortality shook off, in ether pure,  
And struck the stars, now feel my spirits fail;  
They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,  
Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings,  
In sorrow drown'd—but not in sorrow lost.  
How wretched is the man who never mourn'd!  
I dive for precious pearl in Sorrow's stream:  
Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves,  
'Takes all the torment; and rejects the gain.  
(Inestimable gain!) and gives Heav'n leave  
To make him but more wretched, not more wise.

If wisdom is our lesson (and what else  
Ennobles man? what else have angels learn'd?)  
Grief! more proficient in thy school are made,  
Than genius or proud Learning e'er could boast.  
Voracious Learning, often over-fed,  
Digests not into sense her motley meal.  
This bookcase, with dark booty almost burst,  
This forager on others' wisdom, leaves  
Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd;  
With mixt manure she surfeits the rank soil,  
Dung'd, but not drest, and rich to beggary:  
A pomp untameable of weeds prevails:  
Her servant's wealth encumber'd, Wisdom mourns.

And what says Genius? 'Let the dull be wise.'  
Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong,  
And loves to boast, where blush men less inspir'd.

It pleads exemption from the laws of sense,  
Considers reason as a leveller,  
And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.  
That wise it could be thinks an ample claim;  
To glory and to pleasure gives the rest.  
Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone.  
Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.

But Wisdom smiles when humbled mortals weep;  
When sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the  
glebe,

And hearts obdurate feel her softening shower:  
Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows;  
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.  
If so, Narcissa! welcome my relapse;  
I'll raise a tax on my calamity,  
And reap rich compensation from my pain.  
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field,  
And gather every thought of sovereign power  
To chase the moral maladies of man;  
Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,  
Though natives of this coarse penurious soil;  
Nor wholly wither there where seraphs sing,  
Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd, in Heav'n:  
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same  
In either clime, though more illustrious there.  
These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,  
Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,  
And peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.

Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend?

'The' importance of contemplating the tomb;  
Why men decline it; suicide's foul birth;  
The various kinds of grief; the faults of age;

And death's dread character—invite my song.'

And, first, the' importance of our end survey'd.  
Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief.  
Mistaken kindness! our hearts heal too soon.  
Are they more kind than He who struck the  
    blow?

Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,  
And banish peace till nobler guests arrive,  
And bring it back a true and endless peace?  
Calamities are friends: as glaring day  
Of these unnumber'd lustres rob our sight,  
Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts  
Of import high, and light divine to man.

The man how bless'd, who, sick of gaudy scenes,  
(Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)  
Is led by choice to take his favourite walk  
Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,  
Unpierc'd by Vanity's fantastic ray;  
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,  
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!  
Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;  
(Narcissa was thy favourite) let us read  
Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;  
Few orators so tenderly can touch  
The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!  
Apt words can strike; and yet in them we see  
Faint images of what we here enjoy.  
What cause have we to build on length of life?  
Temptations seize when fear is laid asleep,  
And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,  
Truth, radiant goddess! sallies on my soul,  
And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight;



Dispels the mist our sultry passions raise,  
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,  
And shows the real estimate of things,  
Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw;  
Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms;  
Detects temptation in a thousand lies.  
Truth bids me look on men as autumn-leaves,  
And all they bleed for as the summer's dust  
Driv'n by the whirlwind; lighted by her beams,  
I widen my horizon, gain new powers,  
See things invisible, feel things remote,  
Am present with futurities; think nought  
To man so foreign as the joys possess'd;  
Nought so much his as those beyond the grave.

No folly keeps its colour in her sight;  
Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms.  
In pompous promise from her schemes profound,  
If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,  
Like Sibyl, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss;  
At the first blast it vanishes in air.  
Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo!  
How differ worldly wisdom and divine?  
Just as the waning and the waxing moon.  
More empty worldly wisdom every day;  
And every day more fair her rival shines.  
When later, there's less time to play the fool.  
Soon our whole term for Wisdom is expir'd,  
(Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave)  
And everlasting fool is writ in fire,  
Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resemble Sibyl's leaves,  
The good man's days to Sibyl's books compare,

(In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale)  
In price still rising as in number less;  
Inestimable quite his final hour.  
For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones;  
Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.  
'Oh let me die his death!' all Nature cries.  
'Then live his life.'—All Nature falters there;  
Our great physician daily to consult,  
To commune with the grave our only cure.

What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's;  
and yet

From a friend's grave how soon we disengage!  
Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.  
Why are friends ravish'd from us? 'Tis to bind,  
By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts  
The thought of death, which reason, too supine,  
Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens there.  
Nor reason, nor affection, no, nor both  
Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.  
Behold the' inexorable hour at hand!  
Behold the' inexorable hour forgot!  
And to forget it, the chief aim of life,  
Though well to ponder it, is life's chief end.

Is death, that ever-threatening, ne'er remote,  
That all-important, and that only sure,  
(Come when he will) an unexpected guest?  
Nay, though invited by the loudest calls  
Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still,  
Though numerous messengers are sent before,  
To warn his great arrival. What the cause,  
The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill?  
All Heav'n looks down astonish'd at the sight.

Is it that Life has sown her joys so thick,  
We can't thrust in a single care between?  
Is it that Life has such a swarm of cares,  
The thought of death can't enter for the throng?  
Is it that Time steals on with downy feet,  
Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?  
To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;  
We take the lying sister for the same.  
Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,  
For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.  
In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice;  
To the same life none ever twice awoke.  
We call the brook the same; the same we think  
Our life, though still more rapid in its flow,  
Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,  
And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say  
(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)  
That life is like a vessel on the stream?  
In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide  
Of time descend, but not on time intent;  
Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave,  
Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;  
We start, awake, look out: what see we there?  
Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Is this the cause death flies all human thought?  
Or is it judgment, by the Will struck blind,  
That domineering mistress of the soul!  
Like him so strong by Dalilah the fair?  
Or is it fear turns startled Reason back  
From looking down a precipice so steep?  
'Tis dreadful, and the dread is wisely plac'd  
By nature, conscious of the make of man.

A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,  
A flaming sword to guard the tree of life.  
By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour  
The good man would repine; would suffer joys,  
And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.  
The bad, on each punctilious pique of pride,  
Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,  
Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,  
And mar the scenes of Providence below.

What groan was that, Lorenzo? Furies! rise,  
And drown in your less execrable yell,  
Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,  
On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,  
Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death.  
Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,  
So call'd, so thought—and then he fled the field;  
Less base the fear of death than fear of life.  
O Britain! infamous for suicide!

An island, in thy manners, far disjoin'd  
From the whole world of rationals beside!  
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,  
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But, thou, be shock'd while I detect the cause  
Of self-assault, expose the monster's birth,  
And bid Abhorrence hiss it round the world.  
Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun;  
The sun is innocent, thy clime absolv'd.  
Immoral climes kind Nature never made.  
The cause I sing in Eden might prevail,  
And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man (let man in homage bow  
Who names his soul) a native of the skies!

High-born and free, her freedom should maintain,  
Unsold, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.  
The' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,  
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,  
Studious of home, and ardent to return,  
Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup  
With cool reserve light touching, should indulge  
On immortality, her godlike taste;  
There take large draughts; make her chief banquet there.

But some reject this sustenance divine;  
To beggarly vile appetites descend,  
Ask alms of earth for guests that came from Heav'n!  
Sink into slaves, and sell, for present hire,  
Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)  
Their native freedom, to the prince who sways  
This nether world: and when his payments fail,  
When his foul basket gorges them no more,  
Or their pall'd palates loath the basket full,  
Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage,  
For breaking all the chains of Providence,  
And bursting their confinement, though fast barr'd  
By laws divine and human, guarded strong  
With horrors doubled to defend the pass,  
The blackest Nature or dire guilt can raise,  
And moated round with fathomless destruction,  
Sure to receive and whelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,  
Or, worse, o'erlook'd; o'erlook'd by magistrates,  
Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed  
Is madness, but the madness of the heart.  
And what is that? Our utmost bound of guilt.

A sensual unreflecting life is big  
With monstrous births and suicide, to crown  
The black infernal brood. The bold to break  
Heaven's law supreme, and desperately rush  
Through sacred Nature's murder on their own,  
Because they never think of death, they die.  
'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,  
At once to shun and meditate his end.  
When by the bed of languishment we sit,  
(The seat of Wisdom! if our choice, not fate)  
Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,  
Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,  
Number their moments, and in every clock  
Start at the voice of an eternity;  
See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift  
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,  
Then sink again, and quiver into death,  
That most pathetic herald of our own;  
How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man  
In perfect vengeance? no; in pity sent,  
To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,  
Indelible, Death's image on his heart,  
Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.  
We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile.  
The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry.  
Our quick returning folly cancels all,  
As the tide rushing razes what is writ  
In yielding sands, and smoothes the letter'd shore.

Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh?  
Or studied the philosophy of tears?  
(A science yet unlectur'd in our schools)  
Hast thou descended deep into the breast,

And seen their source? if not, descend with me,  
And trace these briny rivulets to their springs.

Our funeral tears from different causes rise:  
As if from separate cisterns in the soul,  
Of various kinds they flow. From tender hearts,  
By soft contagion call'd, some burst at once,  
And stream obsequious to the leading eye:  
Some ask more time, by curious art distill'd.  
Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,  
Struck by the magic of the public eye,  
Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain:  
Some weep to share the fame of the deceas'd,  
So high in merit, and to them so dear:  
They dwell on praises which they think they share,  
And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.  
Some mourn in proof that something they could  
love;

They weep not to relieve their grief, but show.  
Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,  
As conscious all their love is in arrear.  
Some mischievously weep, not unappris'd.  
Tears, sometimes, wave the conquest of an eye.  
With what address the soft Ephesians draw  
Their sable network o'er entangled hearts!  
As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,  
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek!  
Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,  
Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.  
Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,  
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.  
By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,  
Because a decent veil conceals their joy.

Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain,  
As deep in indiscretion as in woe.  
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours  
Tears that deserve more tears, while Reason sleeps,  
Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcern'd,  
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;  
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.  
Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,  
That noble gift! that privilege of man!  
From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy:  
But these are barren of that birth divine;  
They weep impetuous as the summer-storm,  
And full as short! the cruel grief soon tam'd,  
They make a pastime of the stingless tale;  
Far as the deep-resounding knell they spread  
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more:  
No grain of wisdom pays them for their woe.

Half-round the globe, the tears pump'd up by  
death,  
Are spent in watering vanities of life;  
In making folly flourish still more fair.  
When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,  
Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust,  
Instead of learning there her true support,  
Though there thrown down her true support to  
learn,  
Without Heaven's aid, impatient to be blest,  
She crawls to the next shrub or bramble vile,  
Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell;  
With stale foresworn embraces clings anew,  
The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,  
In all the fruitless fopperies of life,



Presents her weed, well fancied, at the ball,  
And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.

So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth  
Stept in with his receipt for making smiles,  
And blanching sables into bridal bloom.  
So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,  
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,  
And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth!  
Not such, Narcissa! my distress for thee;  
I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb,  
To sacrifice to Wisdom.—What wast thou?  
'Young, gay, and fortunate!' Each yields a theme:  
I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;  
(Heav'n knows I labour with severer still!)  
I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.  
A soul without reflection, like a pile  
Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth: what says it to grey hairs?  
Narcissa! I'm become thy pupil now.—  
Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning-dew,  
She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to Heav'n.  
Time on this head was snow'd, yet still 'tis borne  
Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.  
Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe  
Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair;  
With graceless gravity chastising youth,  
That youth chastis'd surpassing in a fault.  
Father of all, forgetfulness of death;  
As if, like objects pressing on the sight,  
Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen;  
Or that life's loan time ripen'd into right,  
And men might plead prescription from the grave;

Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.

Deathless? far from it! such are dead already;  
Their hearts are buried, and the world's their grave.

Tell me, some god! my guardian-angel! tell  
What thus infatuates? what enchantment plants  
The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,  
Already at the door? He knocks; we hear him,  
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends  
Our untouch'd hearts! what miracle turns off  
The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers  
Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd?

We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs  
Around us falling, wounded oft ourselves;  
Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still!  
We see Time's furrows on another's brow,  
And Death intrench'd, preparing his assault:  
How few themselves in that just mirror see!  
Or seeing, draw their inference as strong!  
There death is certain; doubtful here: he must,  
And soon: we may, within an age, expire.

Though grey our heads, our thoughts and aims  
are green;

Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent;  
Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve.

Absurd longevity! More, more, it cries:  
More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind.  
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails?  
Object and appetite must club for joy:  
Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow,  
Baubles, I mean, that strike us from without,  
While Nature is relaxing every string!  
Ask Thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.

Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,  
Has nothing of more manly to succeed;  
Contract the taste immortal; learn ev'n now  
To relish what alone subsists hereafter.  
Divine, or none, henceforth, your joys for ever.  
Of age, the glory is to wish to die:  
That wish is praise and promise; it applauds  
Past life, and promises our future bliss.  
What weakness see not children in their sires!  
Grand-climacterical absurdities!  
Grey-hair'd authority, to faults of youth  
How shocking! it makes folly thrice a fool;  
And our first childhood might our last despise.  
Peace and esteem is all that age can hope:  
Nothing but wisdom gives the first; the last  
Nothing but the repute of being wise.  
Folly bars both: our age is quite undone.

What folly can be ranker? like our shadows,  
Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.  
No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.  
Our hearts should leave the world before the knell  
Calls for our carcasses to mend the soil.  
Enough to live in tempest; die in port:  
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat  
Defects of judgment, and the will subdue;  
Walk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore  
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon,  
And put good works on board, and wait the wind  
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown:  
If unconsider'd, too, a dreadful scene!

All should be prophets to themselves; foresee  
Their future fate; their future fate foretaste:

This art would waste the bitterness of death.  
The thought of death alone the fear destroys:  
A disaffection to that precious thought  
Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,  
Which sleep beneath it on a precipice,  
Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, Lorenzo! Why so warmly prest  
By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,  
The thought of death? That thought is the machine,  
The grand machine! that heaves us from the dust,  
And rears us into men. That thought plied home,  
Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice  
O'erhanging hell, will soften the descent,  
And gently slope our passage to the grave.  
How warmly to be wish'd! what heart of flesh  
Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes?  
Yawn o'er the fate of infinite? what hand,  
Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,  
(To speak a language too well known to thee)  
Would at a moment give its all to Chance,  
And stamp the dye for an eternity?

Aid me, Narcissa! aid me to keep pace  
With destiny, and, ere her scissars cut  
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread  
Of moral death, that ties me to the world.  
Sting thou my slumbering reason to send forth  
A thought of observation on the foe;  
To sally, and survey the rapid march  
Of his ten thousand messengers to man,  
Who, Jehu like, behind him turns them all.  
All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,  
My warrant is gone out, though dormant yet;

Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I, then, forward only look for Death?  
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.  
Man is a self-survivor every year.

Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.

Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey:

My youth, my noon-tide his! my yesterday:

The bold invader shares the present hour.

Each moment on the former shuts the grave

While man is growing, life is in decrease,

And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.

Our birth is nothing but our death begun,

As tapers waste that instant they take fire.

Shall we then fear, lest that should come to pass,  
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?

If fear we must, let that death turn us pale

Which murders strength and ardour; what remains

Should rather call on Death than dread his call.

Ye partners of my fault, and my decline!

Thoughtless of death but when your neighbour's  
knell

(Rude visitant!) knocks hard at your dull sense,

And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear!

Be death your theme in every place and hour;

Nor longer want, ye monumental sires!

A brother-tomb to tell you—you shall die.

That death you dread (so great is Nature's skill!)

Know you shall court before you shal! enjoy.

But you are learn'd; in volumes deep you sit,  
In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance!

Would you be still more learned than the learn'd?

Learn well to know how much need not be known,

And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.  
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,  
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field,  
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.  
You scorn what lies before you in the page  
Of Nature and Experience, moral truth;  
Of indispensable, eternal fruit;  
Fruit, on which mortals feeding, turn to gods;  
And dive in science for distinguish'd names,  
Dishonest fomentation of your pride,  
Sinking in virtue as you rise in fame.  
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords  
Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,  
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.  
Awake, ye curious Indagators; fond  
Of knowing all, but what avails you known.\*  
If you would learn Death's character, attend  
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,  
All dyes of fortune, and all dates of age,  
Together shook in his impartial urn,  
Come forth at random; or, if choice is made,  
The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults  
All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.  
What countless multitudes not only leave,  
But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths!  
Though great our sorrow, greater our surprise.  
Like other tyrants, Death delights to smite  
What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of pow'r  
And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme  
To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;  
The feeble wrap the' athletic in his shroud;  
And weeping fathers build their children's tomb:

Me thine, Narcissa!—What though short thy date?  
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.  
That life is long which answers life's great end.  
The time that bears no fruit deserves no name.  
The man of wisdom is the man of years.  
In hoary youth Methusalems may die;  
O how misdated on their flattering tombs!

Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far:  
And can her gaiety give counsel too?  
That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems,  
Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,  
And opens more the character of Death,  
Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt!—  
' Give Death his due, the wretched and the old;  
Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave;  
Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,  
But own man born to live as well as die.'  
Wretched and old thou giv'st him: young and gay  
He takes: and plunder is a tyrant's joy.  
What if I prove, ' the farthest from the fear  
Are often nearest to the stroke of fate?'

All more than common menaces an end.  
A blaze betokens brevity of life:  
As if bright embers should emit a flame,  
Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,  
And made Youth younger, and taught Life to  
live.

As Nature's opposites wage endless war  
For this offence, as treason to the deep  
Inviolable stupor of his reign,  
Where lust and turbulent ambition sleep,  
Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,  
More life is still more odious; and, reduc'd

By conquest, aggrandizes more his pow'r.  
But wherefore aggrandiz'd? By Heaven's decree  
To plant the soul on her eternal guard,  
In awful expectation of our end.  
'Thus runs Death's dread commission; ' Strike,  
but so

As most alarms the living by the dead.'  
Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,  
And cruel sport with man's securities.  
Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;  
And where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs  
most.

This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?  
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up  
In deep Dissimulation's darkest night.  
Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,  
Who travel under cover, Death assumes  
The name and look of Life, and dwells among us;  
He takes all shapes that serve his black designs:  
Though master of a wider empire far  
Than that o'er which the Roman Eagle flew;  
Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer,  
Or drives his phaëton in female guise;  
Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath,  
His disarray'd oblation he devours.

He most affects the forms least like himself,  
His slender self: hence burly corpulence  
Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.  
Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,  
Or ambush in a smile; or, wanton, dive  
In dimples deep; Love's eddies, which draw in  
Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.



Such on Narcissa's couch he loiter'd long  
Unknown, and when detected, still was seen  
To smile: such peace was Innocence in death!

Most happy they! whom least his arts deceive.  
One eye on death, and one full fix'd on Heav'n,  
Becomes a mortal and immortal man.

Long on his wiles a piqued and jealous spy  
I've seen, or dream'd I saw, the tyrant dress,  
Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.  
Say, Muse! for thou remember'st, call it back,  
And show Lorenzo the surprising scene;  
If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain.

'Twas in a circle of the gay I stood:  
Death would have enter'd; Nature push'd him back:  
Supported by a doctor of renown,  
His point he gain'd; then artfully dismiss'd  
The sage; for Death design'd to be conceal'd.  
He gave an old vivacious usurer  
His meagre aspect, and his naked bones,  
In gratitude for plumping up his prey,  
A pamper'd spendthrift, whose fantastic air,  
Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow,  
He took in change, and underneath the pride  
Of costly linen tuck'd his filthy shroud.  
His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane,  
And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipp'd,  
Out-sallies on adventures. Ask you where?  
Where is he not? For his peculiar haunts  
Let this suffice; sure as night follows day,  
Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the  
world,

When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason  
shuns.

When against Reason Riot shuts the door,  
And gaiety supplies the place of sense,  
Then, foremost at the banquet and the ball,  
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye;  
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.

Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,  
Inly he laughs to see them laugh at him,  
As absent far; and when the revel burns,  
When Fear is banish'd, and triumphant Thought,  
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,  
Against him turns the key, and bids him sup  
With their progenitors—he drops his mask,  
Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire!

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,  
From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire,  
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.  
And is not this triumphant treachery,  
And more than simple conquest, in the fiend?

And now, Lorenzo! dost thou wrap thy soul  
In soft security, because unknown  
Which moment is commission'd to destroy?  
In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.  
Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fix'd,  
Fix'd as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,  
All expectation of the coming foe.  
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,  
Lest Slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,  
And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong;  
Thus give each day the merit and renown  
Of dying well, though doom'd but once to die;

Nor let life's period, hidden (as from most)  
Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.

Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate:  
Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid:  
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,  
Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die.  
Though Fortune, too (our third and final theme)  
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,  
And every glittering gewgaw, on her sight,  
To dazzle and debauch it from its mark.  
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,  
And every thought that misses it is blind.  
Fortune, with Youth and Gaiety conspir'd,  
To weave a triple wreath of happiness,  
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow:  
And could Death charge through such a shining  
shield?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,  
As if to damp our elevated aims,  
And strongly preach humility to man.  
O how portentous is prosperity!  
How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines!  
Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,  
To cull his victims from the fairest fold,  
And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.  
When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er  
With recent honours, bloom'd with every bliss,  
Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,  
The gaudy centre, of the public eye;  
When Fortune, thus, has toss'd her child in air,  
Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state,  
How often have I seen him dropt at once,  
Our morning's envy! and our evening's sigh!

As if her bounties were the signal giv'n,  
The flowery wreath, to mark the sacrifice,  
And call Death's arrows on the destin'd prey.

High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate.  
Ask you for what? To give his war on man  
The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;  
Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.  
And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime  
Of life? to hang his hairy nest on high,  
On the slight timber of the topmost bough,  
Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall?  
Granting grim Death at equal distance there,  
Yet peace begins just where ambition ends.  
What makes man wretched? happiness denied?  
Lorenzo! no; 'tis happiness disdain'd.  
She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile,  
And calls herself Content, a homely name;  
Our flame is transport, and content our scorn.  
Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,  
And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;  
A tempest to warm transport near of kin.  
Unknowing what our mortal state admits,  
Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise,  
And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace;  
Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth!  
Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!  
As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up  
Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast,  
see

Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.  
See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,  
Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware,

And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad  
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.  
All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends,  
Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,  
Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,  
(Still more ador'd) to snatch the golden show'r.

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more,  
As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.

O what a precious pack of votaries,  
Unkennel'd from the prisons and the stews,  
Pour in, all opening in their idol's praise!  
All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,  
And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,  
Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,  
Untasted, through mad appetite for more;  
Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still:  
Sagacious all to trace the smallest game,  
And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)  
Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe; they launch, they  
fly

O'er just, o'er sacred, all-forbidden ground,  
Drunk with the burning scent of place or pow'r,  
Staunch to the foot of Lucre till they die.

Or if for men you take them, as I mark  
Their manners, thou their various fates survey.  
With aim mismeasur'd, and impetuous speed,  
Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off,  
Through fury to possess it: some succeed,  
But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.  
From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,  
And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.  
To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off,

Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.  
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad;  
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.  
Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize,  
And rend abundance into poverty;  
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles;  
Smiles, too, the goddess; but smiles most at those  
(Just victims of exorbitant desire!)  
Who perish at their own request, and whelm'd  
Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.  
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain;  
The number small which happiness can bear.  
Though various for awhile their fates, at last  
One curse involves them all: at Death's approach  
All read their riches backward into loss,  
And mourn, in just proportion, to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)  
Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.  
And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?  
And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?  
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;  
A blow which, while it executes, alarms,  
And startles thousands with a single fall.  
As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,  
Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,  
The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence,  
By the strong strokes of labouring hinds subdu'd,  
Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,  
In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;  
The conscious forest trembles at the shock,  
And hill, and stream, and distant dale resound.

These high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,

Should I collect, my quiver would be full;  
A quiver which, suspended in mid air,  
Or near Heaven's archer, in the zodiac, hung,  
(So could it be) should draw the public eye,  
The gaze and contemplation of mankind!  
A constellation awful, yet benign,  
To guide the gay through life's tempestuous wave,  
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock;  
' From greater danger to grow more secure,  
And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate.'

Lysander, happy past the common lot,  
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.  
He woo'd the fair Aspasia; she was kind.  
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were  
    bless'd;

All who knew envied; yet in envy lov'd:  
Can Fancy form more finish'd happiness?  
Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome  
Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires  
Float in the wave, and break against the shore:  
So break those glittering shadows, human joys.  
The faithless morning smil'd: he takes his leave,  
To re-embrace, in ecstasies, at eve:  
The rising storm forbids: the news arrives;  
Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.  
She felt it seen, (her heart was apt to feel)  
And drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,  
In suffocating sorrows, shares his tomb.  
Now round the sumptuous bridal monument  
The guilty billows innocently roar,  
And the rough sailor passing, drops a tear.  
A tear?—can tears suffice?—but not for me.

How vain our efforts! and our arts how vain!  
The distant train of thought I took, to shun,  
Has thrown me on my fate.—These died together;  
Happy in ruin! undivorc'd by death!  
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part is peace.—  
Narcissa! Pity bleeds at thought of thee;  
Yet thou wast only near me, not myself.  
Survive myself?—that cures all other woe.  
Narcissa lives; Philander is forgot.  
O the soft commerce! O the tender ties,  
Close twisted with the fibres of the heart!  
Which broken, break them, and drain off the soul  
Of human joy, and make it pain to live.—  
And is it then to live? When such friends part,  
'Tis the survivor dies.—My heart! no more.

END OF NIGHT FIFTH.



# PREFACE

TO

## *THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.*

---

FEW ages have been deeper in dispute about religion, than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question: *Is Man Immortal*, or, *Is he not?* If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, truth, reason, religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shown) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them. But if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth,

unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity, how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest, that souls should not survive! The Heathen world confessed, that they rather hoped, than firmly believed Immortality! and how many Heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred page assures us, that life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel; but by how many is the Gospel rejected, or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded, that most, if not all, our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error, by some

doubt of their immortality, at the bottom. And I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians. For it is hard to conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly, and impartially, inquire after the surest means of escaping the one and securing the other. And of such an earnest and impartial inquiry, I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. —If some arguments shall here occur, which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important! For as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason only; viz. Because

where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable. And, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT VI.*

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**THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.**

IN TWO PARTS.

CONTAINING  
THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMOR-  
TALITY.

---

**PART I.**

WHERE, AMONGST OTHER THINGS,  
GLORY AND RICHES ARE PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED.

---

TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY PELHAM.

---

**S**HE\* (for I know not yet her name in Heaven)  
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,  
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail?  
This seeming mitigation but inflames:  
This fancied med'cine heightens the disease.  
The longer known, the closer still she grew,  
And gradual parting is a gradual death.  
'Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts,

\* Referring to Night the Fifth.

By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,  
From hardest hearts confession of distress.

O the long dark approach, through years of pain,  
Death's gallery! (might I dare to call it so?)  
With dismal doubt and sable terror hung,  
Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimmering ray:  
There Fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,  
Forbid Self-love itself to flatter there.  
How oft I gaz'd prophetically sad!  
How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles!  
In smiles she sunk her grief to lessen mine:  
She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain.  
Like powerful armies, trenching at a town,  
By slow and silent, but resistless, sap,  
In his pale progress gently gaining ground,  
Death urg'd his deadly siege; in spite of art,  
Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends  
To succour frail humanity. Ye Stars!  
(Not now first made familiar to my sight)  
And thou, O Moon! bear witness: many a night  
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,  
Tied down my sore attention to the shock,  
By ceaseless depredations on a life  
Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post  
Of observation! darker every hour!  
Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,  
And pointed at eternity below,  
When my soul shudder'd at futurity;  
When, on a moment's point the' important dye  
Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,  
And turn'd up life, my title to more woe.

But why more woe? more comfort let it be.  
Nothing is dead but that which wish'd to die;

Nothing is dead but wretchedness and pain;  
Nothing is dead but what incumber'd, gall'd,  
Block'd up the past, and barr'd from real life.  
Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wise?  
Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars  
Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,  
O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our transition, though the mind,  
An artist at creating self-alarms,  
Rich in expedients for inquietude,  
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take  
Death's portrait true? the tyrant never sat.  
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;  
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.  
Death and his image rising in the brain  
Bear faint resemblance; never are alike;  
Fear shakes the pencil; Fancy loves excess;  
Dark Ignorance is lavish of her shades;  
And these the formidable picture draw.

But grant the worst, 'tis past; new prospects rise,  
And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.  
Far other views our contemplation claim,  
Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;  
Views that suspend our agonies in death.  
Wrapt in the thought of Immortality,  
Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!  
Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on,  
And find the soul unsated with her theme.  
Its Nature, Proof, Importance, fire my song.  
O that my song could emulate my soul!  
Like her, immortal. No!—the soul disdains  
A mark so mean; far nobler hope inflames;

If endless ages can outweigh an hour,  
Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire.

Thy nature, Immortality, who knows?  
And yet who knows it not? it is but life  
In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,  
And spun for ever; dipt by cruel Fate  
In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle, here!  
How short our correspondence with the sun!  
And, while it lasts, inglorious! our best deeds,  
How wanting in their weight! our highest joys,  
Small cordials to support us in our pain,  
And give us strength to suffer. But how great  
To mingle interests, converse, amities,  
With all the sons of Reason, scatter'd wide  
Through habitable space, wherever born,  
Howe'er endow'd! to live free citizens  
Of universal Nature; to lay hold,  
By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme!  
To call Heaven's rich unfathomable mines  
(Mines which support archangels in their state)  
Our own! to rise in science as in bliss,  
Initiate in the secrets of the skies!  
To read creation; read its mighty plan  
In the bare bosom of the Deity!  
The plan and execution to collate?  
To see, before each glance of piercing thought,  
All cloud, all shadow, blown remote, and leave  
No mystery—but that of love divine,  
Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,  
From earth's aceldama, this field of blood,  
Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,  
From darkness and from dust, to such a scene!



Love's element! true joy's illustrious home!  
From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair!  
What exquisite vicissitude of fate!  
Bless'd absolution of our blackest hour!

Lorenzo! these are thoughts that make man  
man,  
The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.  
How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,  
And every moment fear to sink beneath  
The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons)  
How great, in the wild whirl of Time's pursuits,  
To stop, and pause; involv'd in high presage,  
Through the long visto of a thousand years,  
To stand contemplating our distant selves,  
As in a magnifying mirror seen,  
Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine!  
To prophesy our own futurities!  
To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!  
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys  
As far beyond conception as desert,  
Ourselves the' astonish'd talkers and the tale!

Lorenzo! swells thy bosom at the thought?  
The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride.  
Revere thyself,—and yet thyself despise.  
His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none  
Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed,  
Nor there be modest where thou should'st be proud:  
That almost universal error shun.  
How just our pride, when we behold those heights!  
Not those Ambition paints in air, but those  
Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains,  
And angels emulate. Our pride how just!

When mount we? when these shackles cast? when  
quit

This cell of the creation? this small nest,  
Stuck in a corner of the universe,  
Wrapt up in fleecy cloud and fine-spun air?  
Fine-spun to sense, but gross and feculent  
To souls celestial; souls ordain'd to breathe  
Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;  
Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,  
Where Virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears,  
While Pomp imperial begs an alms of Peace.

In empire high, or in proud science deep,  
Ye born of Earth! on what can you confer,  
With half the dignity, with half the gain,  
The gust, the glow, of rational delight,  
As on this theme, which angels praise and share?  
Man's fates and favours are a theme in Heaven.

What wretched repetition cloy us here!  
What periodic potions for the sick!  
Distemper'd bodies! and distemper'd minds!  
In an eternity what scenes shall strike!  
Adventures thicken! novelties surprise!  
What webs of wonder shall unravel there!  
What full day pour on all the paths of Heaven,  
And light the' Almighty's footsteps in the deep!  
How shall the blessed day of our discharge  
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of Fate,  
And straighten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man  
To know; how rich, how full, our banquet there!  
There, not the moral world alone unfolds;  
The world material, lately seen in shades,

And in those shades by fragments only seen,  
And seen those fragments by the labouring eye,  
Unbroken, then, illustrious and entire,  
Its ample sphere, its universal frame,  
In full dimensions, swells to the survey,  
And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight.  
From some superior point (where, who can tell?  
Suffice it, 'tis a point where gods reside)  
How shall the stranger-man's illumin'd eye,  
In the vast ocean of unbounded space,  
Behold an infinite of floating worlds  
Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,  
In endless voyage without port? The least  
Of these disseminated orbs how great!  
Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,  
Huge as leviathan to that small race,  
Those twinkling multitudes of little life,  
He swallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous these!  
Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?  
As particles, as atoms ill-perceiv'd;  
As circulating globules in our veins;  
So vast the plan. Fecundity divine!  
Exuberant source! perhaps I wrong thee still.

If admiration is a source of joy,  
What transport hence! yet this the least in Heaven.  
What this to that illustrious robe He wears,  
Who toss'd this mass of wonders from his hand  
A specimen, an earnest, of his power!  
'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,  
As the mead's meanest floweret to the sun  
Which gave it birth. But what this sun of Heaven?  
This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?

Death, only death, the question can resolve.  
By death cheap bought the' ideas of our joy;  
The bare ideas! solid happiness  
So distant from its shadow chas'd below.

And chase we still the phantom through the fire,  
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?  
And toil we still for sublunary pay?  
Defy the dangers of the field and flood,  
Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,  
Our more than vitals spin (if no regard  
To great futurity) in curious webs  
Of subtle thought and exquisite design;  
(Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly!  
The momentary buz of vain renown!  
A name! a mortal immortality!

Or (meaner still!) instead of grasping air,  
For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire?  
Drudge, sweat, through every shame, for every gain,  
For vile contaminating trash! throw up  
Our hope in Heaven, our dignity with man,  
And deify the dirt matur'd to gold?  
Ambition, Avarice, the two demons these  
Which goad through every slough our human herd,  
Hard travell'd from the cradle to the grave.  
How low the wretches stoop! how steep they climb!  
These demons burn mankind, but most possess  
Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in time to hide eternity?  
And why not in an atom on the shore  
To cover ocean? or a mote, the sun?  
Glory and wealth! have they this blinding pow'r?  
What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind?

Would it surprise thee? Be thou then surpris'd;  
Thou neither know'st: their nature learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,  
What close connexion ties them to my theme.  
First, what is true ambition? The pursuit  
Of glory, nothing less than man can share.  
Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,  
As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,  
Their arts and conquests animals might boast,  
And claim their laurel crowns as well as we,  
But not celestial. Here we stand alone,  
As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent:  
If prone in thought, our stature is our shame;  
And man should blush, his forehead meets the skies.  
The visible and present are for brutes,  
A slender portion! and a narrow bound!  
These reason, with an energy divine,  
O'erleaps, and claims the future and unseen;  
The vast unseen! the future fathomless!  
When the great soul buoys up to this high point,  
Leaving gross Nature's sediments below,  
Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits  
The sage and hero of the fields and woods,  
Asserts his rank, and rises into man.  
This is ambition; this is human fire.

Can parts or place (two bold pretenders!) make  
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng?

Genius and art, Ambition's boasted wings,  
Our boast but ill deserve. A feeble aid!  
Dædalian enginery! If these alone  
Assist our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.  
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,

Our height is but the gibbet of our name.  
A celebrated wretch when I behold,  
When I behold a genius bright and base,  
Of towering talents, and terrestrial aims;  
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,  
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,  
With rubbish mix'd, and glittering in the dust.  
Struck at the splendid, melancholy sight,  
At once compassion soft and envy rise—  
But wherefore envy? talents angel-bright,  
If wanting worth, are shining instruments  
In false Ambition's hand, to finish faults  
Illustrious, and give Infamy renown.

Great ill is an achievement of great pow'rs:  
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.  
Reason the means, affections choose our end;  
Means have no merit, if our end amiss.  
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain.  
What is a Pelham's head to Pelham's heart?  
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.  
Right ends and means make wisdom. Worldly-wise  
Is but half-witted at its highest praise.

Let genius, then, despair to make thee great;  
Nor flatter station. What is station high?  
'Tis a proud mendicant; it boasts, and begs;  
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,  
And oft the throng denies its charity.  
Monarchs and ministers are awful names;  
Whoever wear them challenge our devoir.  
Religion, public order, both exact  
External homage and a supple knee,  
To beings pompously set up, to serve

The meanest slave; all more is Merit's due,  
Her sacred and inviolable right;  
Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.  
Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth;  
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.  
Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,  
And vote the mantle into majesty.  
Let the small savage boast his silver fur;  
His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,  
His own, descending fairly from his sires.  
Shall man be proud to wear his livery,  
And souls in ermine scorn a soul without?  
Can place or lessen us, or aggrandize?  
Pigmies are pigmies still, though perch'd on Alps;  
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.  
Each man makes his own stature, builds himself:  
Virtue alone out-builds the pyramids;  
Her monuments shall last when Egypt's fall.

Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?  
The cause is lodg'd in immortality.  
Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for pow'r;  
What station charms thee? I'll install thee there;  
'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?  
Then thou before was something less than man.  
Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride?  
That treacherous pride betrays thy dignity;  
That pride defames humanity, and calls  
The being mean, which staffs or strings can raise.  
That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,  
From blindness bold, and towering to the skies.  
'Tis born of Ignorance, which knows not man:  
An angel's second; nor his second long.

A Nero, quitting his imperial throne,  
And courting glory from the tinkling string,  
But faintly shadows an immortal soul,  
With empire's self, to pride or rapture fir'd.  
If nobler motives minister no cure,  
Ev'n vanity forbids thee to be vain.

High worth is elevated place: 'tis more;  
It makes the post stand candidate for thee;  
Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man;  
Though no exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;  
And though it wears no ribband, 'tis renown:  
Renown that would not quit thee though disgrac'd,  
Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.  
Other ambition Nature interdicts;  
Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,  
By pointing at his origin and end:  
Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand;  
His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone;  
To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls truly great dart forward on the wing  
Of just ambition, to the grand result,  
The curtain's fall; there, see the buskin'd chief  
Unshod behind this momentary scene,  
Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,  
As vice or virtue sinks him, or sublimes;  
And laugh at this fantastic mummery,  
This antic prelude of grotesque events,  
Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray  
A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,  
And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice  
To Christian pride! which had with horror shock'd  
The darkest pagans, offer'd to their gods.



O thou Most Christian! enemy to peace!  
Again in arms? again provoking Fate?  
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,  
Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes;  
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,  
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies.

Why this so rare? because forgot of all  
The day of death; that venerable day,  
Which sits as judge; that day which shall pronounce  
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.  
Lorenzo! never shut thy thought against it;  
Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room,  
And give it audience in the cabinet.  
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,  
Will tell thee fair, if thou art great or mean.

To doat on aught may leave us, or be left,  
Is that ambition? then let flames descend,  
Point to the centre their inverted spires,  
And learn humiliation from a soul  
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.  
Yet these are they the world pronounces wise;  
The world, which cancels Nature's right and wrong,  
And casts new wisdom: ev'n the grave man lends  
His solemn face to countenance the coin.  
Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.  
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave  
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,  
The most ambitious unambitious, mean;  
In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.  
Nothing can make it less than mad in man  
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,  
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,

But reaching him who gave her wings to fly.  
When blind Ambition quite mistakes her road,  
And downward pores for that which shines above,  
Substantial happiness and true renown,  
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,  
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;  
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition! powerful source of good and ill!  
Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds,  
When disengag'd from earth, with greater ease,  
And swifter flight, transports us to the skies:  
By toys entangled, or in guilt bemir'd,  
It turns a curse; it is our chain and scourge,  
In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we lie,  
Close-grated by the sordid bars of sense;  
All prospect of eternity shut out;  
And, but for execution, ne'er set free.

With error in ambition justly charg'd,  
Find we Lorenzo wiser in his wealth?  
What if thy rental I reform, and draw  
An inventory new to set thee right?  
Where thy true treasure? Gold says, 'Not in me:'  
And, 'Not in me,' the Diamond. Gold is poor;  
India's insolvent: seek it in thyself;  
Seek in thy naked self, and find it there;  
In being so descended, form'd, endow'd;  
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race!  
Erect, immortal, rational, divine!  
In senses which inherit earth, and heavens;  
Enjoy the various riches Nature yields;  
Far nobler; give the riches they enjoy;  
Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;

Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright sire:  
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,  
At a small inlet, which a grain might close,  
And half create the wondrous world they see.  
Our senses, as our reason, are divine.  
But for the magic organ's powerful charm,  
Earth were a rude, uncolour'd chaos still.  
Objects are but the' occasion, ours the' exploit;  
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,  
Which Nature's admirable picture draws,  
And beautifies creation's ample dome.  
Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,  
Man makes the matchless image man admires.  
Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,  
Superior wonders in himself forgot,  
His admiration waste on objects round,  
When Heaven makes him the soul of all he sees?  
Absurd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.

What wealth in senses such as these! what wealth  
In fancy, fir'd to form a fairer scene  
Than sense surveys! in Memory's firm record,  
Which, should it perish, could this world recall  
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!  
In colours fresh, originally bright,  
Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!  
What wealth in intellect, that sovereign pow'r!  
Which sense and fancy summons to the bar;  
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;  
And from the mass those underlings import,  
From their materials sifted and refin'd,  
And in Truth's balauce accurately weigh'd,  
Forms art and science, government and laws;

The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,  
The vitals and the grace of civil life!  
And manners (sad exception!) set aside,  
Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair  
Of his idea, whose indulgent thought  
Long, long ere Chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliss.

What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around,  
Disdaining limit or from place or time;  
And hear, at once, in thought extensive, hear  
The' Almighty Fiat, and the trumpet's sound!  
Bold on creation's outside walk, and view  
What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be;  
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,  
Creations new in Fancy's field to rise!  
Souls that can grasp whate'er the' Almighty made,  
And wander wild through things impossible!  
What wealth in faculties of endless growth,  
In quenchless passions violent to crave,  
In liberty to choose, in pow'r to reach,  
And in duration (how thy riches rise!)  
Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss!

Ask you what pow'r resides in feeble man  
That bliss to gain? Is virtue's, then, unknown?  
Virtue, our present peace, our future prize.  
Man's unprecious, natural estate,  
Improveable at will, in virtue lies!  
Its tenure sure; its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap! for what?  
To breed new wants and beggar us the more!  
Then make a richer scramble for the throng.  
Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long,  
Almost by miracle, is tir'd with play,

Like rubbish, from displying engines thrown,  
Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;  
Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes;  
New masters court, and call the former fool,  
(How justly!) for dependence on their stay.  
Wide scatter, first, our playthings, then our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?  
Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme.  
Riches enable to be richer still;  
And richer still what mortal can resist?  
Thus wealth (a cruel task-master!) enjoins  
New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train!  
And murders peace, which taught it first to shine.  
The poor are half as wretched as the rich,  
Whose proud and painful privilege it is,  
At once, to bear a double load of woe;  
To feel the stings of envy and of want,  
Outrageous want! both Indies cannot cure.

A competence is vital to content.  
Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease;  
Sick, or incumber'd, is our happiness.  
A competence is all we can enjoy.  
O be content, where Heaven can give no more!  
More, like a flash of water from a lock,  
Quickens our spirit's movement for an hour,  
But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys  
Above our native temper's common stream.  
Hence disappointment lurks in every prize,  
As bees in flowers, and stings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns,  
Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.  
Much learning shows how little mortals know;

Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy:  
At best, it babies us with endless toys,  
And keeps us children till we drop to dust.  
As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,  
They fail to find what they so plainly see;  
Thus men, in shining riches, see the face  
Of Happiness, nor know it is a shade;  
But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,  
And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want!  
Who lives to Nature rarely can be poor;  
Who lives to fancy never can be rich.  
Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,  
In debt to Fortune, trembles at her pow'r.  
The man of reason smiles at her and death.  
O what a patrimony this! a being  
Of such inherent strength and majesty,  
Not worlds possess can raise it; worlds destroy'd  
Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course,  
When thine, O Nature! ends; too blest to mourn  
Creation's obsequies. What treasure this!  
The monarch is a beggar to the man.

Immortal! ages past, yet nothing gone!  
Morn without eve! a race without a goal;  
Unshorten'd by progression infinite!  
Futurity for ever future! life  
Beginning still where computation ends!  
'Tis the description of a deity!  
'Tis the description of the meanest slave:  
The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn?  
The meanest slave thy sovereign glory shares.  
Proud youth! fastidious of the lower world!

Man's lawful pride includes humility;  
Stoops to the lowest; is too great to find  
Inferiors; all immortal! brothers all!  
Proprietors eternal of thy love.

Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong,  
As this the soul? it thunders to the thought;  
Reason amazes, gratitude o'erwhelms:  
No more we slumber on the brink of Fate;  
Rous'd at the sound, the' exulting soul ascends,  
And breathes her native air; an air that feeds  
Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;  
Quick-kindles all that is divine within us,  
Nor leaves one loitering thought beneath the stars.

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame?  
Immortal! were but one immortal, how  
Would others envy! how would thrones adore!  
Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost?  
How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven!  
O vain, vain, vain, all else!—Eternity!  
A glorious and a needful refuge that,  
From vile imprisonment in abject views.  
'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,  
Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,  
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill.  
That only, and that amply, this performs;  
Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;  
Their terror those, and these their lustre lose;  
Eternity depending covers all;  
Eternity depending all achieves;  
Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;  
Blends her distinctions; abrogates her pow'rs;  
The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,

Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,  
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,  
The man beneath; if I may call him man,  
Whom immortality's full force inspires.  
Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought!  
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,  
By minds quite conscious of their high descent,  
Their present province, and their future prize;  
Divinely darting upward every wish,  
Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!

Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?  
If earth's whole orb, by some due-distant eye  
Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,  
And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.  
Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,  
Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.  
To that stupendous view, when souls awake,  
So large of late, so mountainous to man,  
Time's toys subside; and equal all below.

Enthusiastic this? then all are weak,  
But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height  
Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled:  
And all may do what has by man been done.  
Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,  
Boundless, interminable joys can weigh  
Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?  
What slave unblest'd, who from to-morrow's dawn  
Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,  
And, thron'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!  
Her own immense appointments to compute,  
Or comprehend her high prerogatives,



In this her dark minority, how toils,  
How vainly pants, the human soul divine!  
Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy:  
What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?

In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung,  
Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!  
Are there who wrap the world so close about them,  
They see no farther than the clouds, and dance  
On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,  
Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,  
Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and  
song?

Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?  
Are there on earth (let me not call them men)  
Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts,  
Unconscious as the mountain of its ore,  
Or rock of its inestimable gem?  
When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these  
Shall know their treasure; treasure then no more.

Are there (still more amazing!) who resist  
The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,  
The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?  
Who through this bosom-barrier burst their way;  
And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink?  
Who labour downwards through the' opposing  
powers

Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,  
To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock  
Of endless night? night darker than the grave's?  
Who slight the proofs of immortality!  
With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,  
Work all their engines, level their black fires,

To blot from man this attribute divine,  
(Than vital blood far dearer to the wise)  
Blasphemers, and rank atheists to themselves?

To contradict them, see all nature rise!  
What object, what event, the moon beneath,  
But argues, or endears, an after-scene?  
To reason proves, or weds it to desire!  
All things proclaim it needful; some advance  
One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.  
A thousand arguments swarm round my pen,  
From Heaven, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,  
By Nature, as her common habit, worn;  
So pressing Providence a truth to teach,  
Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys,  
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms  
Creation, and holds empire far beyond!  
Eternity's inhabitant august!  
Of two eternities amazing Lord!  
One past ere man's or angel's had begun;  
Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault  
Thy glorious immortality in man;  
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,  
Of moment infinite! but relish'd most  
By those who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth  
Of thee, the Great Immutable, to man  
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;  
And he who most consults her is most wise.  
Lorenzo! to this heavenly Delphos haste,  
And come back all-immortal, all-divine.  
Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all;

All change, no death. Day follows night; and night  
The dying day: stars rise, and set, and rise;  
Earth takes the' example. See, the Summer gay,  
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,  
Droops into pallid Autumn: Winter gray,  
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,  
Blows Autumn, and his golden fruits away:  
Then melts into the Spring: soft Spring, with breath  
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,  
Recalls the first. All, to re-flourish, fades:  
As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend:  
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just,  
Nature revolves, but man advances; both  
Eternal: that a circle, this a line:  
That gravitates, this soars. The' aspiring soul,  
Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends,  
Zeal and humility her wings, to Heaven.  
The world of matter, with its various forms,  
All dies into new life. Life born from death  
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.  
No single atom, once in being, lost,  
With change of counsel charges the Most High.

What hence infers Lorenzo? can it be  
Matter immortal? and shall spirit die?  
Above the nobler shall less noble rise?  
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,  
No resurrection know? shall man alone,  
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,  
Less privileg'd than grain on which he feeds?  
Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize  
The bliss of being, or, with previous pain,

Deplore its period, by the spleen of Fate,  
Severely doom'd Death's single unredeem'd?

If Nature's revolution speaks aloud  
In her gradation, hear her louder still.  
Look Nature through, 'tis neat gradation all.  
By what minute degrees her scale ascends!  
Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,  
To that above it join'd, to that beneath.  
Parts into parts reciprocally shot,  
Abhor divorce: What love of union reigns!  
Here dormant matter waits a call to life;  
Half-life, half-death, join there; here life and sense;  
There sense from reason steals a glimmering ray;  
Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd  
The chain unbroken upward, to the realms  
Of incorporeal life? those realms of bliss  
Where Death hath no dominion! Grant a make  
Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthy part,  
And part ethereal; grant the soul of man  
Eternal, or in man the series ends.  
Wide yawns the gap; connexion is no more;  
Check'd Reason halts; her next step wants support;  
Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme,  
A scheme Analogy pronounc'd so true;  
Analogy! man's surest guide below.

Thus far all Nature calls on thy belief;  
And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,  
False attestation on all nature charge,  
Rather than violate his league with Death?  
Renounce his reason, rather than renounce  
The dust belov'd, and run the risk of Heaven?  
O what indignity to deathless souls!

What treason to the majesty of man!  
Of man immortal! Hear the lofty style:  
'If so decreed, the' Almighty will be done.  
Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend,  
And grind us into dust. The soul is safe;  
The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,  
As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre;  
O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;  
His charter, his inviolable rights,  
Well-pleas'd to learn from Thunder's impotence,  
Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms.'

But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!  
The glories of the world, thy sevenfold shield.  
Other ambition than of crowns in air,  
And superlunary felicities,  
Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can,  
And turn those glories that inchant against thee.  
What ties thee to this life proclaims the next.  
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.

Come, my Ambitious! let us mount together  
(To mount Lorenzo never can refuse)  
And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,  
Look down on earth.—What seest thou? wondrous things!

Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies.  
What lengths of labour'd lands! what loaded seas!  
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war!  
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,  
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.  
Nor can the' eternal rocks his will withstand;  
What levell'd mountains! and what lifted vales!  
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,

And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.  
Some mid the wondering waves majestic rise,  
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.  
Far greater still! (what cannot mortal might?)  
See wide dominions ravish'd from the deep!  
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.  
Or southward turn, to delicate and grand;  
The finer arts there ripen in the sun.  
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,  
Ascend the skies! the proud triumphal arch  
Shows us half Heaven beneath its ample bend.  
High through mid air, here streams are taught to  
    flow;  
Whole rivers there, laid by in basons, sleep.  
Here plains turn oceans; there vast oceans join  
Through kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to  
    shore,  
And chang'd creation takes its face from man.  
Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,  
Where fame and empire wait upon the sword;  
See fields in blood; hear naval thunders rise;  
Britannia's voice! that awes the world to peace.  
How yon enormous mole projecting breaks  
The mid-sea, furious waves! their roar amidst  
Out-speaks the Deity, and says, 'O Main!  
Thus far, nor farther; new restraints obey.'  
Earth's disembowel'd! measur'd are the skies!  
Stars are detected in their deep recess!  
Creation widens! vanquish'd Nature yields!  
Her secrets are extorted! Art prevails!  
What monument of genius, spirit, power!  
And now, Lorenzo! raptur'd at this scene,

Whose glories render Heaven superfluous! say,  
Whose footsteps these?—Immortals have been here.  
Could less than souls immortal this have done?  
Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal;  
And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess  
These are Ambition's works; and these are great:  
But this, the least immortal souls can do:  
Transcend them all.—But what can these transcend?

Dost ask me what?—one sigh for the distress.  
What then for Infidels? a deeper sigh.  
'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man.  
How little they who think aught great below!  
All our ambitions death defeats but one,  
And that it crowns.—Here cease we; but, ere long,  
More powerful proof shall take the field against thee,  
Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.





**PREFACE**  
  
TO  
  
PART II.  
  
OF  
  
*THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.*

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As we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue, and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange; it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be. Yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase, at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it; if that opinion, which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night, be just. It is there supposed that all our infidels, whatever scheme for argument's sake, and to keep them-

selves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into their deplorable error, by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom. And the more I consider this point, the more I am persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity is a strange error; yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed. For it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? There are but two in Nature; but two within the compass of human thought: and these are,—That either God will not, or cannot, punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes. And, since Omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish. And strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since on this member of their alternative, there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the

shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, throw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages, it is, accordingly, pursued at large; and some arguments for immortality, new (at least to me) are ventured on in them. There also the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view, than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of heathen antiquity: what pity it is they are not sincere! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider, with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received, by those whom they so much admire? What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their heathen worthies, Socrates ('tis well known) was the most guarded,

dipassionate, and composed: yet this great master of temper was angry; and angry at his last hour! and angry with his friend; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment; angry, for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising? what could be the cause? The cause was for his honour; it was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, ‘Where he should deposit his remains?’ it was resented by Socrates; as implying a dishonourable supposition, that he could be so mean, as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact, well considered, would make our infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates; or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example, to share his glory; and, consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality, which is all I desire, and that for their sakes; for I am persuaded that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

JULY 7, 1744.

THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT VII.*

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BEING THE  
SECOND PART  
OF THE  
**INFIDEL RECLAIMED.**

CONTAINING  
THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMOR-  
TALITY.

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**H**EAVEN gives the needful, but neglected, call.  
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,  
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?  
Deaths stand, like Mercuries, in every way;  
And kindly points us to our journey's end.  
Pope, who couldst make immortals! art thou dead?  
I give thee joy: nor will I take my leave,  
So soon to follow. Man but dives in death,  
Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise,  
The grave his subterranean road to bliss.  
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so;

Through various parts our glorious story runs;  
Time gives the preface, endless age unrols  
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.

This, earth and skies\* already have proclaim'd.  
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come;  
And who, what God foretels (who speaks in things  
Still louder than in words) shall dare deny?  
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,  
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man.  
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,  
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?  
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,  
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,  
His own indictment; he condemns himself;  
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;  
Or Nature there, imposing on her sons,  
Has written fables; man was made a lie.

Why discontent for ever harbour'd there?  
Incurable consumption of our peace!  
Resolve me why the cottager and king,  
He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he  
Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,  
Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,  
Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,  
In fate so distant, in complaint so near?

Is it that things terrestrial can't content?  
Deep in rich pasture will thy flocks complain?  
Not so; but to their master is denied  
To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease  
In this, not his own place, this foreign field,

\* Night the Sixth.

Where Nature foddors him with other food  
Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,  
Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,  
Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd.  
Is Heaven then kinder to thy flocks than thee?  
Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;  
In part remote; for that remoter part  
Man bleats from instinct, though, perhaps, de-  
bauch'd

By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause.  
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!  
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise;  
And discontent is immortality.

Shall sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heaven,  
Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here,  
With brutal acquiescence in the mire?  
Lorenzo! no; they shall be nobly pain'd;  
The glorious foreigners, distress'd, shall sigh  
On thrones, and thou congratulate the sigh.  
Man's misery declares him born for bliss:  
His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,  
And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.

Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our  
powers,  
Speak the same language; call us to the skies:  
Unripen'd these, in this inclement clime,  
Scarce rise above conjecture and mistake;  
And for this land of trifles those, too strong,  
Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life.  
What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?  
Meet objects for our passions Heaven ordain'd,  
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave  
No fault but in defect. Blest Heaven! avert

A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss!  
O for a bliss unbounded! far beneath  
A soul immortal is a mortal joy.  
Nor are our pow'rs to perish immature;  
But, after feeble effort here, beneath  
A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,  
Transplanted from this sublunary bed,  
Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.

Reason progressive, instinct is complete;  
Swift Instinct leaps; slow Reason feebly climbs.  
Brutes soon their zenith reach; their little all  
Flows in at once; in ages they no more  
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.  
Were man to live coëval with the sun,  
The patriarch-pupil would be learning still;  
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half unlearn'd.  
Men perish in advance, as if the sun  
Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drown'd;  
If fit with dim illustrious to compare,  
The sun's meridian with the soul of man.  
To man, why, step-dame Nature! so severe?  
Why thrown aside thy master-piece half-wrought,  
While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy?  
Or if, abortively, poor man must die,  
Nor reach what reach he might, why die in  
dread?

Why curs'd with foresight? wise to misery?  
Why of his proud prerogative the prey?  
Why less pre-eminent in rank than pain?  
His immortality alone can tell;  
Full ample fund to balance all amiss,  
And turn the scale in favour of the just!

His immortality alone can solve



The darkest of enigmas, human hope;  
Of all the darkest, if at death we die.  
Hope, eager Hope, the' assassin of our joy,  
All present blessings treading under foot,  
Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.  
With no past toils content, still planning new,  
Hope turns us o'er to Death alone for ease.  
Possession why more tasteless than pursuit?  
Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?  
That wish accomplish'd, why the grave of bliss?  
Because in the great future buried deep,  
Beyond our plans of empire and renown,  
Lies all that man with ardour should pursue;  
And He who made him bent him to the right.

Man's heart the' Almighty to the future sets,  
By secret and inviolable springs,  
And makes his hope his sublunary joy.  
Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still:  
'More, more!' the glutton cries: for something new  
So rages appetite. If man can't mount  
He will descend. He starves on the possess'd,  
Hence the world's master, from Ambition's spire,  
In Caprea plung'd; and div'd beneath the brute.  
In that rank sty why wallow'd Empire's son  
Supreme? because he could no higher fly;  
His riot was Ambition in despair.

Old Rôme consulted birds; Lorenzo! thou,  
With more success, the flight of Hope survey;  
Of restless Hope, for ever on the wing.  
High perch'd o'er every thought that falcon sits,  
To fly at all that rises in her sight;  
And, never stooping, but to mount again

Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,  
And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.

There should it fail us (it must fail us there,  
If being fails) more mournful riddles rise,  
And virtue vies with hope in mystery.  
Why virtue? where its praise, its being, fled?  
Virtue is true self-interest pursu'd:  
What true self-interest of quite-moral man?  
To close with all that makes him happy here.  
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,  
Then vice is virtue; 'tis our sovereign good.  
In self-applause is virtue's golden prize?  
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme:  
Whence self-applause? from conscience of the  
right.

And what is right but means of happiness?  
No means of happiness when virtue yields;  
That basis failing, falls the building too,  
And lays in ruin every virtuous joy.

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,  
So long rever'd, so long reputed wise,  
Is weak, with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.  
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams  
Of self-exposure, laudable and great?  
Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death?  
Die for thy country?—thou romantic fool!  
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink.  
Thy country! what to thee?—the Godhead, what?  
(I speak with awe!) though He should bid thee  
bleed;

If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt?  
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow:

Be deaf; preserve thy being; disobey.

Nor is it disobedience. Know, Lorenzo!

Whate'er the' Almighty's subsequent command,  
His first command is this:—' Man, love thyself.'

In this alone, free agents are not free.

Existence is the basis, bliss the prize;

If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime,

Bold violation of our law supreme,

Black suicide; though nations, which consult

Their gain at thy expense, resound applause.

Since virtue's recompense is doubtful here,

If man dies wholly, well may we demand

Why is man suffer'd to be good in vain?

Why to be good in vain is man enjoin'd?

Why to be good in vain is man betray'd?

Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breast,

By sweet complacencies from virtue felt?

Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part?

Or if blind Instinct (which assumes the name

Of sacred Conscience) plays the fool in man,

Why Reason made accomplice in the cheat?

Why are the wisest loudest in her praise?

Can man by reason's beam be led astray?

Or, at his peril, imitate his God?

Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,

Or both are true; or man survives the grave.

Or man survives the grave; or own, Lorenzo!

Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.

Dauntless thy spirit; cowards are thy scorn.

Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.

The man immortal, rationally brave,

Dares rush on death—because he cannot die.

But if man loses all when life is lost,

He lives a coward, or a fool expires.  
A daring infidel (and such there are,  
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,  
Or pure heroical defect of thought)  
Of all earth's madmen most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd  
For valour, virtue, science, all we love,  
And all we praise; for worth, whose noon-tide beam,  
Enabling us to think in higher style,  
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers;  
Dreain we that lustre of the moral world  
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?  
Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,  
And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,  
The Mind Almighty? Could it be that Fate,  
Just when the lineaments begin to shine,  
And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,  
With night eternal blot it out, and give  
The skies alarm, lest angels too might die?

If human souls, why not angelic too  
Extinguish'd? and a solitary God,  
O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne?  
Shall we this moment gaze on God in man?  
The next lose man for ever in the dust?  
From dust we disengage, or man mistakes,  
And there where least his judgment fears a flaw.  
Wisdom and worth how boldly he commends!  
Wisdom and worth are sacred names; rever'd  
Where not embrac'd; applauded! deified!  
Why not compassion'd too? If spirits die,  
Both are calamities, inflicted both  
To make us but more wretched. Wisdom's eye  
Acute, for what? to spy more miseries;

And worth, so recompens'd, new-points their stings.  
Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,  
And worth exalted humbles us the more.  
Thou wilt not patronise a scheme that makes  
Weakness and vice the refuge of mankind.

‘Has virtue, then, no joys?’—Yes, joys dear-  
bought;

Talk ne’er so long, in this imperfect state,  
Virtue and vice are at eternal war.  
Virtue’s a combat; and who fights for nought,  
Or for precarious, or for small reward?  
Who virtue’s self-reward so loud resound,  
Would take degrees angelic here below,  
And virtue, while they compliment, betray,  
By feeble motives and unfaithful guards.  
The crown, the’ unfading crown, her soul inspires:  
’Tis that, and that alone, can countervail  
The body’s treacheries and the world’s assaults.  
On earth’s poor pay our famish’d virtue dies;  
Truth incontestable! in spite of all  
A Bayle has preach’d, or a Voltaire believ’d.

In man the more we dive, the more we see  
Heaven’s signet stamping an immortal make.  
Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base  
Sustaining all; what find we? knowledge, love.  
As light and heat, essential to the sun,  
These to the soul: and why, if souls expire?  
How little lovely here? how little known?  
Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil,  
And love unfeign’d may purchase perfect hate.  
Why starv’d, on earth, our angel-appetites,  
While brutal are indulg’d their fulsome fill?

Were then capacities divine conferr'd,  
As a mock diadem, in savage sport,  
Rank insult of our pompous poverty,  
Which reaps but pain from seeming claims so fair?  
In future age lies no redress? and shuts  
Eternity the door on our complaint?  
If so, for what strange ends were mortals made!  
The worst to wallow, and the best to weep;  
The man who merits most, must most complain.  
Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven,  
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?

This cannot be. To love and know, in man  
Is boundless appetite and boundless pow'r;  
And these demonstrate boundless objects too.  
Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heaven suits in all;  
Nor, nature through, e'er violates this sweet  
Eternal concord, on her tuneful string.  
Is man the sole exception from her laws?  
Eternity struck off from human hope,  
(I speak with truth, but veneration too)  
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heaven,  
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud  
On Nature's beauteous aspect, and deforms  
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.  
If such is man's allotment, What is Heaven?  
Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.

Or own the soul immortal, or invert  
All order. Go, mock-majesty! go, man!  
And bow to thy superiors of the stall,  
Through every scene of sense superior far:  
They graze the turf untill'd, they drink the stream  
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd

With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs,  
Mankind's peculiar! Reason's precious dower!  
No foreign clime they ransack for their robes!  
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar;  
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd;  
They find a paradise in every field,  
On boughs forbidden where no curses hang;  
Their ill no more than strikes the sense, un-  
stretch'd

By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:  
When the worst comes, it comes unfear'd; one  
stroke

Begins and ends their woe: they die but once;  
Bless'd, incommunicable privilege! for which  
Proud man, who rules the globe and reads the stars,  
Philosopher or hero, sighs in vain.

Account for this prerogative in brutes.

No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,  
But what beams on it from eternity.  
O sole and sweet solution! that unties  
The difficult, and softens the severe;  
The cloud on Nature's beauteous face dispels:  
Restores bright order; casts the brute beneath;  
And reinthrones us in supremacy  
Of joy, ev'n here. Admit immortal life,  
And virtue is knight-errantry no more;  
Each virtue brings in hand a golden dower,  
Far richer in reversion: hope exults:  
And though much bitter in our cup is thrown,  
Predominates, and gives the taste of Heaven.  
O wherefore is the Deity so kind?  
Astonishing beyond astonishment!

Heaven our reward—for Heaven enjoy'd below.

Still unsubdued thy stubborn heart?—for there  
The traitor lurks who doubts the truth I sing.  
Reason is guiltless; Will alone rebels.

What, in the stubborn heart, if I should find  
New unexpected witnesses against thee?  
Ambition, Pleasure, and the Love of Gain!  
Canst thou suspect that these, which make the soul  
The slave of earth, should own her heir of Heaven?  
Canst thou suspect what makes us disbelieve  
Our immortality, should prove it sure?

First, then, Ambition summon to the bar.  
Ambition's shame, Extravagance, Disgust,  
And inextinguishable Nature, speak.  
Each much deposes; hear them in their turn.

Thy soul, how passionately fond of fame!  
How anxious that fond passion to conceal!  
We blush, detected in designs on praise,  
Though for best deeds, and from the best of men;  
And why? because immortal. Art divine  
Has made the body tutor to the soul:  
Heaven kindly gives our blood a moral flow,  
Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there  
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,  
Which stoops to court a character from man;  
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit  
Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite outspeaks  
The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire  
At high presumptions of their own desert,  
One age is poor applause; the mighty shout,  
The thunder by the living few begun,



Late Time must echo; worlds unborn resound.  
We wish our names eternally to live:  
Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human  
thought,

Had not our natures been eternal too.  
Instinct points out an interest in hereafter;  
But our blind reason sees not where it lies;  
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of immortality,  
And in itself a shadow. Soon as caught,  
Contemn'd; it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.  
Consult the' ambitious, 'tis Ambition's cure.  
'And is this all?' cried Cæsar, at his height,  
Disgusted. This third proof Ambition brings  
Of immortality. The first in fame,  
Observe him near, your envy will abate:  
Sham'd at the disproportion vast, between  
The passion and the purchase, he will sigh  
At such success, and blush at his renown.  
And why? because far richer prize invites  
His heart; far more illustrious glory calls;  
It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can Ambition a fourth proof supply?  
It can, and stronger than the former three,  
Yet quite o'erlook'd by some reputed wise.  
Though disappointments in ambition pain,  
And though success disgusts; yet still, Lorenzo!  
In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts,  
By Nature planted for the noblest ends.  
Absurd the fam'd advice to Pyrrhus giv'n,  
More prais'd than ponder'd; specious, but unsound:  
Sooner that hero's sword the world had quell'd,

Than reason his ambition. Man must soar;  
An obstinate activity within,  
An insuppressive spring, will toss him up,  
In spite of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,  
Each villager has his ambition too:  
No sultan prouder than his fetter'd slave.  
Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,  
Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,  
And cry,—' Behold the wonders of my might!  
And why? because immortal as their lord;  
And souls immortal must for ever heave  
At something great; the glitter or the gold;  
The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven.

Nor absolutely vain is human praise,  
When human is supported by divine.  
I'll introduce Lorenzo to himself:  
Pleasure and Pride (bad masters!) share our hearts.  
As love of pleasure is ordain'd to guard  
And feed our bodies, and extend our race;  
The love of praise is planted to protect  
And propagate the glories of the mind.  
What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,  
Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,  
Earth's happiness? from that the delicate,  
The grand, the marvellous, of civil life.  
Want and convenience, under-workers, lay  
The basis, on which love of glory builds.  
Nor is thy life, O Virtue! less in debt  
To praise, thy secret-stimulating friend.  
Were men not proud, what merit should we miss!  
Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.  
Praise is the salt that seasons right to man,

And whets his appetite for moral good.  
Thirst of applause is Virtue's second guard;  
Reason, her first; but reason wants an aid;  
Our private reason is a flatterer;  
'Thirst of applause calls public judgment in,  
'To poise our own, to keep an even scale,  
And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.

Here a fifth proof arises, stronger still.  
Why this so nice construction of our hearts?  
These delicate moralities of sense;  
This constitutional reserve of aid  
To succour Virtue when our reason fails;  
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,  
And oft the mark of injuries on earth,  
When labour'd to maturity (its bill  
Of disciplines and pains unpaid) must die?  
Why freighted rich to dash against a rock?  
Were man to perish when most fit to live,  
O how mis-spent were all these stratagems,  
By skill divine inwoven in our frame?  
Where are Heaven's holiness and mercy fled?  
Laughs Heaven, at once, at virtue and at man?  
If not, why that discourag'd, this destroy'd?

Thus far Ambition. What says Avarice?  
This her chief maxim, which has long been thine:  
'The wise and wealthy are the same.'—I grant it.  
To store up treasure, with incessant toil,  
This is man's province, this his highest praise.  
To this great end keen Instinct stings him on:  
To guide that instinct, Reason! is thy charge;  
'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lies:  
But Reason, failing to discharge her trust,

Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,  
A blunder follows; and blind Industry,  
Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course,  
(The course where stakes of more than gold are won)  
O'erloading with the cares of distant age  
The jaded spirits of the present hour,  
Provides for an eternity below.

‘Thou shalt not covet,’ is a wise command;  
But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys.  
Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,  
And avarice is a virtue most divine.  
Is faith a refuge for our happiness?—  
Most sure; and is it not for reason too?  
Nothing this world unriddles but the next.  
Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain?  
From inextinguishable life in man:  
Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,  
Had wanted wing to fly so far in guilt.  
Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice:  
Yet still their root is immortality.  
These its wild growths, so bitter and so base,  
(Pain, and reproach!) Religion can reclaim,  
Refine, exalt, throw down their poisonous lee,  
And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.

See, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,  
And falsely promises an Eden here:  
Truth she shall speak for once, though prone to lie,  
A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name.  
To Pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf;  
Then hear her now, now first thy real friend.

Since Nature made us not more fond than proud  
Of happiness (whence hypocrites in joy!

Makers of mirth! artificers of smiles!)  
Why should the joy most poignant sense affords  
Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride?—  
Those heaven-born blushes tell us man descends,  
Ev'n in the zenith of his earthly bliss:  
Should Reason take her infidel repose,  
This honest instinct speaks our lineage high;  
This instinct calls on darkness to conceal  
Our rapturous relation to the stalls.  
Our glory covers us with noble shame,  
And he that's unconfounded is unmann'd.  
The man that blushes is not quite a brute.  
Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I close,  
Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made;  
But pleasure full of glory as of joy;  
Pleasure which neither blushes nor expires.

The witnesses are heard; the cause is o'er;  
Let Conscience file the sentence in her court:  
Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey,  
Thus, seal'd by Truth the' authentic record runs.

‘ Know all; know, Infidels,—unapt to know!  
'Tis immortality your nature solves;  
'Tis immortality deciphers man,  
And opens all the mysteries of his make.  
Without it, half his instincts are a riddle;  
Without it, all his virtues are a dream.  
His very crimes attest his dignity;  
His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,  
Declares him born for blessings infinite:  
What less than infinite makes unabsurd  
Passions, which all on earth but more inflames?  
Fierce passions, so mismeasur'd to this scene,  
Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,

Far, far beyond the worth of all below,  
For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,  
And evidence our title to the skies.'

Ye gentle theologues, of calmer kind!  
Whose constitution dictates to your pen,  
Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comes from hell!  
Think not our passions from corruption sprung,  
Though to corruption now they lend their wings:  
That is their mistress, not their mother. All  
(And justly) reason deem divine: I see,  
I feel a grandeur in the passions too,  
Which speaks their high descent, and glorious end;  
Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire.  
In Paradise itself they burnt as strong  
Ere Adam fell, though wiser in their aim.  
Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,  
What though our passions are run mad, and stoop,  
With low terrestrial appetite, to graze  
On trash, on toys, dethron'd from high desire?  
Yet still, through their disgrace, a feeble ray  
Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:  
But these (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)  
When reason moderates the rein aright,  
Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,  
Where once they soar'd illustrious; ere seduc'd  
By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,  
And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their frenzy lasts; their frenzy fails  
To disappoint one providential end,  
For which Heaven blew up ardour in our hearts.  
Were Reason silent, boundless Passion speaks  
A future scene of boundless objects too,  
And brings glad tidings of eternal day.

Eternal day! 'tis that enlightens all;  
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.  
Consider man as an immortal being,  
Intelligible all; and all is great;  
A crystalline transparency prevails,  
And strikes full lustre through the human sphere:  
Consider man as mortal, all is dark  
And wretched; Reason weeps at the survey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, ' And let her weep;  
Weak, modern Reason: ancient times were wise.  
Authority, that venerable guide,  
Stands on my part; the fain'd Athenian Porch  
(And who for wisdom so renown'd as they?)  
Denied this immortality to man.'

I grant it; but affirm, they prov'd it too.  
A riddle this!—Have patience; I'll explain.

What noble vanities, what moral flights,  
Glittering through their romantic wisdom's page,  
Make us, at once, despise them and admire!  
Fable is flat to these high-season'd Sires;  
They leave the' extravagance of song below.  
' Flesh shall not feel; or, feeling, shall enjoy  
The dagger or the rack; to them, alike  
A bed of roses or the burning bull.'  
In men exploding all beyond the grave,  
Strange doctrine this!—as doctrine it was strange,  
But not as prophecy; for such it prov'd,  
And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:  
They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.  
The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame;  
The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost,  
Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,

To find the bold adventures of his thought  
Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

Whence, then, those thoughts? those towering  
thoughts, that flew  
Such monstrous heights?—From instinct, and from  
pride.

The glorious instinct of a deathless soul,  
Confus'dly conscious of her dignity,  
Suggested truths they could not understand.  
In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm,  
Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay,  
As light in chaos, glimmering through the gloom:  
Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,  
Pleas'd Pride proclaim'd what Reason disbeliev'd.  
Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell  
Rav'd nonsense, destin'd to be future sense,  
When life immortal, in full day should shine,  
And Death's dark shadows fly the Gospel sun.  
They spoke what nothing but immortal souls  
Could speak; and thus the truth they question'd  
prov'd.

Can then absurdities, as well as crimes,  
Speak man immortal? All things speak him so.  
Much has been urg'd; and dost thou call for more?  
Call, and with endless questions be distress'd,  
All unresolvable, if earth is all.

‘ Why life, a moment; infinite, desire?  
Our wish, eternity? Our home, the grave?  
Heaven's promise dormant lies in human hope;  
Who wishes life immortal proves it too.  
Why happiness pursu'd, though never found?  
Man's thirst of happiness declares it is,



(For Nature never gravitates to nought)  
That thirst unquench'd declares it is not here.  
My Lucia, thy Clarissa, call to thought;  
Why cordial friendship rivetted so deep,  
As hearts to pierce at first, at parting rend,  
If friend and friendship vanish in an hour?  
Is not this torment in the mask of joy?  
Why by reflection marr'd the joys of sense?  
Why past and future preying on our hearts,  
And putting all our present joys to death?  
Why labours reason? instinct were as well;  
Instinct far better; what can choose can err.  
O how infallible the thoughtless brute!  
'Twere well his Holiness were half as sure.  
Reason with Inclination why at war?  
Why sense of guilt? why conscience up in arms?  
Conscience of guilt is prophecy of pain,  
And bosom-counsel to decline the blow.  
Reason with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,  
If nothing future paid forbearance here.  
Thus on—these, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,  
All promise, some insure a second scene;  
Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far  
Than all things else most certain; were it false,  
What truth on earth so precious as the lie?  
This world it gives us, let what will ensue;  
This world it gives in that high cordial, hope:  
The future of the present is the soul.  
How this life groans when sever'd from the next!  
Poor mutilated wretch that disbelieves!  
By dark distrust his being cut in two,  
In both parts perishes; life void of joy,

Sad prelude of eternity in pain!

Could'st thou persuade me the next life could  
fail

Our ardent wishes, how should I pour out  
My bleeding heart in anguish, new as deep!  
Oh! with what thoughts thy hope, and my despair,  
Abhorr'd Annihilation! blasts the soul,  
And wide extends the bounds of human woe!  
Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,  
In this black channel would my ravings run:

' Grief from the future borrow'd peace, e'er-while.  
The future vanish'd! and the present pain'd!  
Strange import of unprecedented ill!  
Fall how profound! like Lucifer's the fall!  
Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!  
From where fond Hope built her pavilion high,  
The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once  
To-night! to nothing! darker still than night.  
If 'twas a dream, why wake me my worst foe?  
Lorenzo! boastful of the name of friend!  
O for delusion! O for error still!  
Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant  
A thinking being in a world like this,  
Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite,  
More curst than at the fall!—The sun goes out!  
The thorns shoot up! what thorns in every thought!  
Why sense of better? it imbitters worse.  
Why sense? why life? if but to sigh, then sink  
To what I was? twice nothing! and much woe!  
Woe from Heaven's bounties!—woe from what  
was wont

To flatter most, high intellectual powers.

Thought, virtue, knowledge! blessings, by thy  
scheme,

All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once  
My soul's ambition, now her greatest dread.

To know myself true wisdom?—No; to shun  
That shocking science, parent of Despair!  
Avert thy mirror: if I see, I die.

‘ Know my Creator? climb his bless'd abode  
By painful speculation, pierce the veil,  
Dive in his nature, read his attributes,  
And gaze in admiration—on a foe,  
Obtruding life, with-holding happiness!  
From the full rivers that surround his throne,  
Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;  
Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease  
To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more!  
Ye sable clouds! ye darkest shades of night!  
Hide him, for ever hide him, from my thought,  
Once all my comfort, source and soul of joy!  
Now leagued with furies, and with \* thee, against me.

‘ Know his achievements? study his renown?  
Contemplate this amazing universe,  
Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete!  
For what? mid miracles of nobler name  
To find one miracle of misery?  
To find the being, which alone can know  
And praise his works, a blemish on his praise?  
Through Nature's ample range, in thought to stroll,  
And start at man, the single mourner there,  
Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pangs and  
death?

\* Lorenzo.

‘ Knowing is suffering: and shall Virtue share  
The sigh of Knowledge?—Virtue shares the sigh.  
By straining up the steep of excellent,  
By battles fought, and from temptation won,  
What gains she but the pang of seeing worth,  
Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark  
With every vice, and swept to brutal dust?  
Merit is madness, virtue is a crime,  
A crime to reason, if it costs us pain  
Unpaid: what pain, amidst a thousand more,  
To think the most abandon’d, after days  
Of triumph o’er their betters, find in death.  
As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay!

‘ Duty! religion!—these, our duty done,  
Imply reward. Religion is mistake.  
Duty!—there’s none, but to repel the cheat.  
Ye Cheats! away: ye daughters of my pride,  
Who feign yourselves the favourites of the skies,  
Ye towering Hopes! abortive energies!  
That toss and struggle in my lying breast,  
To scale the skies, and build presumptions there,  
As I were heir of an eternity.  
Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no more.  
Why travel far in quest of sure defeat?  
As bounded as my being be my wish.  
All is inverted, wisdom is a fool.  
Sense! take the rein; blind Passion! drive us on;  
And, Ignorance! befriend us on our way;  
Ye new, but truest patrons of our peace!  
Yes, give the pulse full empire; live the brute,  
Since as the brute we die: the sum of man,  
Of godlike man! to revel and to rot.

‘ But not on equal terms with other brutes,  
Their revels a more poignant relish yield,  
And safer too; they never poisons choose.  
Instinct than Reason makes more wholesome  
          meals,

And sends all-marring Murmur far away.  
For sensual life they best philosophise;  
Theirs that serene the sages sought in vain:  
’Tis man alone expostulates with Heaven;  
His all the pow’r and all the cause to mourn.  
Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears?  
And bleed in anguish none but human hearts?  
The wide-stretch’d realm of intellectual woe,  
Surpassing sensual far, is all our own.  
In life so fatally distinguish’d, why  
Cast in one lot, confounded, lump’d, in death?

‘ Ere yet in being was mankind in guilt?  
Why thunder’d this peculiar clause against us,  
All-mortal and all-wretched?—Have the skies  
Reasons of state their subjects may not scan,  
Nor humbly reason when they sorely sigh?  
All-mortal and all-wretched!—’Tis too much,  
Unparallel’d in Nature: ’tis too much,  
On being unrequested at thy hands,  
Omnipotent! for I see nought but power.

‘ And why see that? why thought? To toil and eat,  
Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.  
What superfluities are reasoning souls!  
Oh give eternity! or thought destroy.  
But without thought our curse were half unfelt;  
Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart,  
And therefore ’tis bestow’d. I thank thee, Reason!

For aiding life's too small calamities,  
And giving being to the dread of death.  
Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much  
For me to trespass on the brutal rights?  
Too much for Heaven to make one emmet more?  
Too much for Chaos to permit my mass  
A longer stay with essences unwrought,  
Unfashion'd, untormented into man?  
Wretched preferment to this round of pains!  
Wretched capacity of frensy, thought!  
Wretched capacity of dying, life!  
Life, thought, worth, wisdom, all (O foul revolt!)  
Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.

‘Death, then, has chang'd its nature too: O Death!  
Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heaven!  
Best friend of man! since man is man no more.  
Why in this thorny wilderness so long,  
Since there's no promis'd land's ambrosial bower  
To pay me with its honey for my stings?  
If needful to the selfish schemes of Heaven  
To sting us sore, why mock'd our misery?  
Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads?  
Why this illustrious canopy display'd?  
Why so magnificently lodg'd Despair?  
At stated periods, sure-returning, roll  
These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute  
Their length of labours and of pains, nor lose  
Their misery's full measure?—Smiles with flowers  
And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming earth,  
That man may languish in luxurious scenes,  
And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys?  
Claim earth and skies man's admiration, due

For such delights! blest animals! too wise  
To wonder, and too happy to complain!

‘ Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene:  
Why not a dungeon dark for the condemn’d?  
Why not the dragon’s subterranean den  
For man to howl in? why not his abode  
Of the same dismal colour with his fate?  
A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense  
Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders  
As congruous, as, for man this lofty dome,  
Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high  
desire;

If from her humble chamber in the dust,  
While proud thought swells, and high desire in-  
flames,

The poor worm calls us for her inmates there,  
And round us Death’s inexorable hand  
Draws the dark curtain close, undrawn no more.

‘ Undrawn no more!—Behind the cloud of death,  
Once, I beheld a sun, a sun which gilt  
That sable cloud, and turn’d it all to gold.  
How the grave’s alter’d! fathomless as hell!  
A real hell to those who dreamt of Heaven.  
Annihilation! how it yawns before me!  
Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense,  
The privilege of angels and of worms,  
An outcast from existence! and this spirit,  
This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,  
This particle of energy divine,  
Which travels Nature, flies from star to star,  
And visits gods, and emulates their powers,  
For ever is extinguish’d. Horror! death!

Death of that death I fearless once survey'd!—  
When horror universal shall descend,  
And Heaven's dark concave urn all human race,  
On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,  
How just this verse! this monumental sigh!

Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,  
Deep in the rubbish of the general wreck,  
Swept ignominious to the common mass  
Of matter, never dignified with life,  
Here lie proud rationals; the sons of Heaven!  
The lords of earth! the property of worms!  
Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow!  
Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expir'd!  
All gone to rot in chaos, or to make  
Their happy transit into blocks or brutes,  
Nor longer sully their Creator's name.

Lorenzo! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.  
Just is this history! If such is man,  
Mankind's historian, though divine, might weep.  
And dares Lorenzo smile?—I know thee proud!  
For once let pride befriend thee: Pride looks pale  
At such a scene, and sighs for something more.  
Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,  
And art thou then a shadow? less than shade?  
A nothing? less than nothing? To have been,  
And not to be, is lower than unborn.  
Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm  
Thine equal? Runs thy taste of pleasure high?  
Why patronise sure death of every joy?  
Charm riches? why choose beggary in the grave,  
Of every hope a bankrupt! and for ever?  
Ambition, Pleasure, Avarice, persuade thee



To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,  
They lately prov'd\*, thy soul's supreme desire.

What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?  
Great Nature's master-appetite destroy'd,  
Is endless life and happiness despis'd:  
Or both wish'd here, where neither can be found?  
Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heaven!  
Dar'st thou persist? and is there nought on earth  
But a long train of transitory forms,  
Rising and breaking millions in an hour?  
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up  
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?  
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!  
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?  
Kind is fell Lucifer compar'd to thee.  
Oh! spare this waste of being half-divine,  
And vindicate the' economy of Heaven.

Heaven is all love, all joy in giving joy;  
It never had created but to bless;  
And shall it then strike off the list of life  
A being bless'd, or worthy so to be?  
Heaven starts at an annihilating God.

Is that all Nature starts at thy desire?  
Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?  
What is that dreadful wish?—the dying groan  
Of Nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt.  
What deadly poison has thy nature drank?  
To Nature, undebauch'd, no shock so great.  
Nature's first wish is endless happiness;  
Annihilation is an after-thought,

\* In the Sixth Night.

A monstrous wish, unborn till Virtue dies.  
And, oh! what depth of horror lies inclos'd!  
For non-existence no man ever wish'd,  
But first he wish'd the Deity destroy'd.

If so, what words are dark enough to draw  
Thy picture true? the darkest are too fair.  
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour  
Of desperation, by what fury's aid,  
In what infernal posture of the soul,  
All hell invited, and all hell in joy  
At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,  
Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme  
Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,  
And deities begun, reduc'd to dust?

There's nought (thou say'st) but one eternal  
flux

Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven  
Through time's rough billows into night's abyss.  
Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,  
Is there no rock on which man's tossing thought  
Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,  
And boldly think it something to be born?  
Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,  
Is there no central, all-sustaining base,  
All-realizing, all-connecting power,  
Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,  
And force Destruction to refund her spoil?  
Command the grave restore her taken prey?  
Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield?  
And earth and ocean pay their debt of man,  
True to the grand deposit trusted there?  
Is there no potentate, whose out-stretch'd arm,

When ripening time calls forth the' appointed hour,  
Pluck'd from foul Devastation's famish'd maw,  
Binds present, past, and future, to his throne?  
His throne how glorious! thus divinely grac'd  
By germinating beings clustering round!

A garland worthy the Divinity!

A throne by Heaven's omnipotence in smiles,  
Built (like a Pharos towering in the waves)  
Amidst immense effusions of his love!

An ocean of communicated bliss!

An all-prolific, all-preserving God!

This were a God indeed.—And such is man,  
As here presum'd; he rises from his fall.

Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,  
Each blossom fair of Deity destroy'd?

Nothing is dead: nay, nothing sleeps; each soul,  
That ever animated human clay,

Now wakes, is on the wing: and where, O where,  
Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,  
As sounding brass, collects us, round Heaven's

throne

Conglob'd, we bask in everlasting day,  
(Paternal splendour!) and adhere for ever.

Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,  
In this vast vessel of the universe,

How should we gasp, as in an empty void!

How in the pangs of famish'd hope expire!

How bright my prospect shines! how gloomy  
thine!

A trembling world! and a devouring God!

Earth but the shambles of Omnipotence!

Heaven's face all stain'd with causeless massacres  
Of countless millions, born to feel the pang

Of being lost. Lorenzo! can it be?  
This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life.  
Who would be born to such a phantom world,  
Where nought substantial but our misery?  
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,  
So soon to perish, and revive no more?  
The greater such a joy, the more it pains.  
A world so far from great (and yet how great  
It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it;  
Being a shadow; consciousness a dream:  
A dream how dreadful! universal blank  
Before it and behind! poor man a spark  
From non-existence struck by wrath divine,  
Glittering a moment, nor that moment sure,  
'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night,  
His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

Lorenzo! dost thou feel these arguments?  
Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?  
How hast thou dar'd the Deity dethrone?  
How dar'd indict him of a world like this?  
If such the world, creation was a crime;  
For what is crime but cause of misery?  
Retract, blasphemer! and unriddle this,  
Of endless arguments above, below,  
Without us, and within, the short result——  
'If man's immortal, there's a God in Heaven.'

But wherefore such redundancy? such waste  
Of argument! one sets my soul at rest;  
One obvious, and at hand, and, oh!—at heart.  
So just the skies, Philander's life so pain'd,  
His heart so pure, that or succeeding scenes  
Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.

'What an old tale is this!' Lorenzo cries.—

I grant this argument is old; but truth  
No years impair; and had not this been true,  
Thou never hadst despis'd it for its age.  
Truth is immortal as thy soul; and fable  
As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make  
Heaven's highest blessing vengeance. O be wise!  
Nor make a curse of immortality.

Say, know'st thou what it is, or what thou art?  
Know'st thou the' importance of a soul immortal:  
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!  
Amazing pomp; redouble this amaze!  
Ten thousand add; and twice ten thousand more;  
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,  
And calls the' astonishing magnificence  
Of unintelligent creation poor.

For this believe not me: no man believe;  
Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less  
Than those of the Supreme; nor his, a few:  
Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim  
Thy soul's importance. Tremble at thyself,  
For whom Omnipotence has wak'd so long;  
Has wak'd, and work'd, for ages; from the birth  
Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.

In this small province of his vast domain  
(All Nature bow while I pronounce his name!)  
What has God done, and not for this sole end,  
To rescue souls from death? the soul's high price  
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.  
The soul's high price is the creation's key,  
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays  
The genuine cause of every deed divine:  
That is the chain of ages which maintains

Their obvious correspondence, and unites  
Most distant periods in one bless'd design:  
That is the mighty hinge on which have turn'd  
All revolutions, whether we regard  
The natural, civil, or religious, world;  
The former two but servants to the third:  
To that their duty done, they both expire,  
Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd,  
And angels ask, ' Where once they shone so fair?'

To lift us from this abject to sublime;  
This flux to permanent; this dark to day;  
This foul to pure; this turbid to serene;  
This mean to mighty!—for this glorious end  
The' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke!  
The world was made, was ruin'd, was restor'd:  
Laws from the skies were publish'd, were repeal'd;  
On earth kings, kingdoms, rose; kings, kingdoms,  
fell;

Fam'd sages lighted up the Pagan world;  
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance  
Through distant age; saints travail'd, martyrs bled;  
By wonders sacred Nature stood controll'd;  
The living were translated; dead were rais'd;  
Angels, and more than angels, came from Heaven;  
And, oh! for this descended lower still;  
Guilt was hell's gloom; astonish'd at his guest,  
For one short moment Lucifer ador'd.

Lorenzo! and wilt thou do less?—For this  
That hallow'd page, fools scoff at, was inspir'd,  
Of all these truths thrice-venerable code!  
Deists! perform your quarantine, and then  
Fall prostrate ere you touch it, lest you die.

Nor less intensely bent infernal powers  
To mar, than those of light this end to gain.  
O what a scene is here!—Lorenzo! wake!  
Rise to the thought; exert, expand thy soul  
To take the vast idea; it denies  
All else the name of great. Two warring worlds,  
Not Europe against Afric! warring worlds!  
Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing!  
On ardent wings of energy and zeal,  
High-hovering o'er this little brand of strife!  
This sublunary ball.—But strife, for what?  
In their own cause conflicting! no; in thine,  
In man's. His single interest blows the flame;  
His the sole stake; his fate the trumpet sounds  
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!  
Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms;  
Force, force opposing, till the waves run high,  
And tempest Nature's universal sphere.  
Such opposites eternal, stedfast, stern,  
Such foes implacable are good and ill;  
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between  
them.

Think not this fiction. 'There was war in Heaven.'  
From Heaven's high crystal mountain, where it hung,  
The' Almighty's out-stretch'd arm took down his  
bow,  
And shot his indignation at the deep:  
Re-thunder'd Hell, and darted all her fires.—  
And seems the stake of little moment still?  
And slumbers man, who singly caus'd the storm?  
He sleeps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries?  
The greatest thou. How dreadful to reflect

What ardour, care, and counsel, mortals cause  
In breasts divine! how little in their own!

Where'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!  
How happily this wondrous view supports  
My former argument! how strongly strikes  
Immortal life's full demonstration here!

Why this exertion? why this strange regard  
From Heaven's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?—  
Because in man the glorious, dreadful power,  
Extremely to be pain'd, or blest for ever.

Duration gives importance, swells the price.

An angel, if a creature of a day,

What would he be? a trifle of no weight;

Or stand or fall, no matter which, he's gone.

Because immortal, therefore is indulg'd

This strange regard of deities to dust.

Hence Heaven looks down on earth with all her  
eyes;

Hence the soul's mighty moment in her sight;

Hence every soul has partisans above,

And every thought a critic in the skies:

Hence clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,

And every guard a passion for his charge:

Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine

Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels  
hid;

Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,

And Providence came forth to meet mankind:

In various modes of emphasis and awe

He spoke his will, and trembling Nature heard;

He spoke it loud, in thunder and in storm.



Witness thou, Sinai\*! whose cloud-cover'd height,  
 And shaking basis, own'd the present God:  
 Witness, ye Billows†! whose returning tide,  
 Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,  
 Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell;  
 Witness, ye Flames! the' Assyrian tyrant blew‡  
 To sevenfold rage, as impotent as strong:  
 And thou, Earth! witness, whose expanding jaws  
 Clos'd o'er Presumption's sacrilegious sons§:  
 Has not each element, in turn, subscrib'd  
 The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wise?  
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove  
 To strike this truth through adamantine man?  
 If not all adamant, Lorenzo! hear;  
 All is delusion, Nature is wrapt up  
 In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye;  
 There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,  
 In all beneath the sun, in all above,  
 (As far as man can penetrate) or Heaven  
 Is an immense, inestimable prize;  
 Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—  
 And shall each toy be still a match for Heaven,  
 And full equivalent for groans below?  
 Who would not give a trifle to prevent  
 What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?  
 Lorenzo! thou hast seen (if thine to see)  
 All Nature and her God (by Nature's course,  
 And Nature's course controll'd) declare for me.  
 The skies above proclaim 'immortal man!'

\* Exod. xix. 16. 18.

† Exod. xiv. 27.

‡ Dan. iii. 19.

§ Numb. xvi. 32.

And 'man immortal!' all below resounds.  
The world's a system of theology,  
Read by the greatest strangers to the schools;  
If honest, learn'd; and sages o'er a plough.  
Is not, Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee  
This hard alternative, or to renounce  
Thy reason and thy sense, or to believe?  
What then is unbelief? 'tis an exploit,  
A strenuous enterprize; to gain it man  
Must burst through every bar of common sense,  
Of common shame, magnanimously wrong.  
And what rewards the sturdy combatant?  
His prize repentance; infamy his crown.

But wherefore infamy?—for want of faith  
Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides;  
There's nothing to support him in the right.  
Faith in the future wanting is, at least  
In embryo, every weakness, every guilt,  
And strong temptation ripens it to birth.

If this life's gain invites him to the deed,  
Why not his country sold, his father slain?  
'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme;  
And his supreme, his only good, is here.  
Ambition, avarice, by the wise disdain'd,  
Is perfect wisdom while mankind are fools,  
And think a turf or tombstone covers all:  
These find employment, and provide for sense  
A richer pasture and a larger range;  
And sense, by right divine, ascends the throne,  
When virtue's prize and prospect are no more;  
Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.  
Would Heaven quite beggar Virtue if belov'd?

‘Has Virtue charms?’—I grant her heavenly fair;  
But if unportion’d, all will Interest wed,  
Though that our admiration, this our choice.  
The virtues grow on immortality;  
That root destroy’d, they wither and expire.  
A Deity believ’d will nought avail;  
Rewards and punishments make God ador’d,  
And hopes and fears give Conscience all her power.  
As in the dying parent dies the child,  
Virtue with Immortality expires.  
Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,  
Whate’er his boast, has told me he’s a knave.  
His duty ’tis to love himself alone,  
Nor care though mankind perish if he smiles.  
Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die,  
Is dead already; nought but brute survives.

And are there such?—Such candidates there are  
For more than death; for utter loss of being,  
Being, the basis of the Deity!  
Ask you the cause?—the cause they will not tell;  
Nor need they. Oh the sorceries of sense!  
They work this transformation on the soul,  
Dismount her like the serpent at the fall,  
Dismount her from her native wing (which soar’d  
Ere-while ethereal heights) and throw her down  
To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.

Is it in words to paint you? O ye Fall’n!  
Fallen from the wings of reason and of hope!  
Erect in stature, prone in appetite!  
Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain!  
Lovers of argument, averse to sense!  
Boasters of liberty, fast bound in chains!

Lords of the wide creation, and the shame!  
More senseless than the' irrationals you scorn!  
More base than those you rule! than those you pity  
Far more undone! O ye most infamous  
Of beings, from superior dignity!  
Deepest in woe from means of boundless bliss!  
Ye curs'd by blessings infinite! because  
Most highly favour'd, most profoundly lost!  
Ye motley mass of contradiction strong!  
And are you, too, convinc'd your souls fly off  
In exhalation soft, and die in air,  
From the full flood of evidence against you?  
In the coarse drudgeries and sinks of sense,  
Your soul have quite worn out the make of Heaven,  
By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own.  
But though you can deform, you can't destroy;  
To curse, not uncreate, is all your power.

Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;  
Renounce St. Evremond\*, and read St. Paul.  
Ere wrapt by miracle, by reason wing'd,  
His mounting mind made long abode in Heaven.  
This is free-thinking, unconfin'd to parts,  
To send the soul, on curious travel bent,  
Through all the provinces of human thought;  
To dart her flight through the whole sphere of man;  
Of this vast universe to make the tour;  
In each recess of space and time at home;  
Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;  
And, like a prince of boundless interests there,  
Still most ambitious of the most remote;

\* An infidel writer.

To look on truth unbroken and entire;  
Truth in the system, the full orb; where truths  
By truths enlighten'd and sustain'd, afford  
An arch-like, strong foundation, to support  
The' incumbent weight of absolute, complete  
Conviction; here, the more we press, we stand  
More firm; who most examine, most believe.  
Parts, like half-sentences, confound; the whole  
Conveys the sense, and God is understood;  
Who not in fragments writes to human race:  
Read his whole volume, sceptic! then reply.

This, this is thinking free, a thought that grasps  
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.  
Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene;  
What are earth's kingdoms to yon boundless orbs,  
Of human souls, one day, the destin'd range?  
And what yon boundless orbs to godlike man?  
Those numerous worlds that throng the firmament,  
And ask more space in Heaven, can roll at large  
In man's capacious thought, and still leave room  
For ampler orbs, for new creations there.  
Can such a soul contract itself, or gripe  
A point of no dimension, of no weight?  
It can; it does: the world is such a point;  
And of that point how small a part enslaves!

How small a part—of nothing, shall I say?  
Why not?—Friends, our chief treasure! how they  
drop!

Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander, gone!  
The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has op'd  
A triple mouth, and in an awful voice  
Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.  
How the world falls to pieces round about us,

And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!  
What says this transportation of my friends?  
It bids me love the place where now they dwell,  
And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.  
Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee;  
There, there, Lorenzo! thy Clarissa sails.  
Give thy mind sea-room; keep it wide of earth,  
That rock of souls immortal; cut thy cord;  
Weigh anchor; spread thy sails; call every wind;  
Eye thy Great Pole-star; make the land of Life.

Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,  
And two of death; the last far more severe.  
Life animal is nurtur'd by the sun,  
Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.  
Life rational subsists on higher food,  
Triumphant in his beams who made the day.  
When we leave that sun, and are left by this,  
(The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt)  
'Tis utter darkness; strictly double death.  
We sink by no judicial stroke of Heaven,  
But Nature's course, as sure as plummets fall.  
Since God or man must alter ere we meet,  
(Since light and darkness blend not in one sphere)  
'Tis manifest, Lorenzo! who must change.

If, then, that double death should prove thy lot,  
Blame not the bowels of the Deity;  
Man shall be bless'd, as far as man permits.  
Not man alone, all rationals Heaven arms,  
With an illustrious, but tremendous power,  
To counteract its own most gracious ends;  
And this of strict necessity, not choice;  
That power deny'd, men, angels, were no more  
But passive engines, void of praise or blame.

A nature rational implies the power  
Of being bless'd or wretched as we please,  
Else idle Reason would have nought to do,  
And he that would be barr'd capacity  
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss.  
Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom;  
Invites us ardently, but not compels;  
Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees.  
Man is the maker of immortal fates.  
Man falls by man, if finally he falls;  
And fall he must, who learns from death alone  
The dreadful secret,—that he lives for ever.

Why this to thee?—thee yet, perhaps, in doubt  
Of second life? but wherefore doubtful still?  
Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish:  
What ardently we wish we soon believe;  
Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroy'd:  
What has destroyed it?—shall I tell thee what?  
When fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wish'd;  
And when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve.  
' Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.'  
Nor that the sole detection! Blush, Lorenzo!  
Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.  
The future fear'd?—An infidel, and fear?  
Fear what? a dream? a fable?—How thy dread,  
Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong,  
Affords my cause an undesign'd support?  
How Disbelief affirms what it denies!  
' It, unawares, asserts immortal life.'—  
Surprising! infidelity turns out  
A creed and a confession of our sins:  
Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines.

Lorenzo! with Lorenzo clash no more,  
Nor longer a transparent vizor wear.  
Think'st thou Religion only has her mask?  
Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,  
Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, fail.  
When visited by thought (thought will intrude)  
Like him they serve, they tremble, and believe.  
Is there hypocrisy so foul as this?  
So fatal to the welfare of the world?  
What detestation, what contempt, their due!  
And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape  
That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn.  
If not for that asylum, they might find  
A hell on earth, nor 'scape a worse below.

With insolence and impotence of thought,  
Instead of racking fancy to refute,  
Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—  
But shall I dare confess the dire result?  
Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand?  
From purer manners to sublimer faith,  
Is Nature's unavoidable ascent.  
An honest Deist, where the Gospel shines,  
Matur'd to nobler, in the Christian ends.  
When that blest change arrives, e'en cast aside  
This song superfluous; life immortal strikes  
Conviction in a flood of light divine.  
A Christian dwells, like Uriel\*, in the sun;  
Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight;  
And ardent hope anticipates the skies.  
Of that bright sun, Lorenzo! scale the sphere;

\* See Milton's *Paradise Lost*.



In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore,  
Dost smile?—Poor wretch! thy guardian angel  
          weeps.

What can reclaim you? dare I hope profound

Philosophers the converts of a song?  
Yet know, its title\* flatters you, not me;  
Your's be the praise to make my title good;  
Mine to bless Heaven, and triumph in your praise.  
But since so pestilential your disease,  
Though sovereign is the med'cine I prescribe,  
As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair,  
But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake  
Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise:  
For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,  
E'er wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?  
What ne'er can die, oh! grant to live, and crown  
The wish, and aim, and labour of the skies;  
Increase, and enter on the joys of Heaven:  
Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,  
Receive an imprimatur from above,  
While angels shout—an Infidel Reclaim'd!  
To close, Lorenzo! spite of all my pains,  
Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever!  
Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?  
This is a miracle, and that no more.  
Who gave beginning can exclude an end.  
Deny thou art; then doubt if thou shalt be.  
A miracle with miracles inclos'd  
Is man! and starts his faith at what is strange?  
What less than wonders from the wonderful;  
What less than miracles from God can flow?  
Admit a God—that mystery supreme!  
That cause uncaus'd! all other wonders cease;  
Nothing is marvellous for him to do:  
Deny him—all is mystery besides;

\* The Infidel reclaimed.

Millions of mysteries! each darker far  
Than that thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.  
If weak thy faith, why choose the harder side?  
We nothing know but what is marvellous;  
Yet what is marvellous we can't believe.  
So weak our reason, and so great our God,  
What most surprises in the sacred page,  
Or full as strange, or stranger, must be true.  
Faith is not reason's labour, but repose.

To faith and virtue why so backward man?  
From hence;—the present strongly strikes us all;  
The future, faintly: can we, then, be men?  
If men, Lorenzo! the reverse is right.  
Reason is man's peculiar; sense the brute's.  
The present is the scanty realm of Sense;  
The future Reason's empire unconfined:  
On that expending all her godlike power,  
She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, there;  
There builds her blessings! there expects her praise;  
And nothing asks of Fortune or of men.  
And what is Reason? be she thus defin'd;  
Reason is upright stature in the soul.  
Oh! be a man,—and strive to be a god.

‘For what?(thou say'st)—to damp the joys of life?’  
No; to give heart and substance to thy joys.  
That tyrant, Hope, mark how she domineers;  
She bids us quit realities for dreams;  
Safety and peace for hazard and alarm;  
That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,  
She bids Ambition quit its taken prize,  
Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits  
Though bearing crowns, to spring at distant game,  
And plunge in toils and dangers—for repose.

If hope precarious, and if things, when gain'd,  
Of little moment and as little stay,  
Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys,  
What then that hope which nothing can defeat,  
Our leave unask'd? rich hope of boundless bliss!  
Bliss past man's pow'r to paint it, time's to close!

This hope is earth's most estimable prize;  
This is man's portion, while no more than man:  
Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here;  
Passions of prouder name befriend us less.  
Joy has her tears, and Transport has her death:  
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong,  
Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenest,  
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys:  
'Tis all our present state can safely bear,  
Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!  
A joy attemper'd! a chastis'd delight!  
Like the fair summer-evening, mild, and sweet!  
'Tis man's full cup, his paradise below!

A bless'd hereafter, then, or hop'd or gain'd,  
Is all,—our whole of happiness: full proof  
I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.  
And know, ye foes to song! (well-meaning men,  
Though quite forgotten\* half your Bible's praise!)  
Important truths, in spite of verse, may please:  
Grave minds you praise, nor can you praise too  
much.

If there is weight in an eternity,  
Let the grave listen,—and be graver still.

\* The poetical parts of it.

END OF NIGHT SEVENTH.

THE  
**COMPLAINT.**

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*NIGHT VIII.*

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VIRTUE'S APOLOGY;  
OR,  
*THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.*

IN WHICH ARE CONSIDERED,  
THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE; THE AMBITION AND PLEASURE,  
WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM, OF THE WORLD.

---

AND has all Nature, then, espous'd my part?  
Have I brib'd Heaven and Earth to plead against  
thee?  
And is thy soul immortal?—What remains?  
All, all, Lorenzo!—make immortal bless'd.  
Unbless'd immortals!—what can shock us more?  
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;  
There stows the treasure; thence his title draws;  
Man of the World! (for such wouldst thou be call'd)  
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?  
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was,  
In ancient days, and Christian,—in an age

When men were men, and not asham'd of Heaven,  
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.  
Sprinkled with dew from the Castalian font,  
Fain would I re-baptize thee, and confer  
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflam'd,  
Point out my path, and dictate to my song.  
To thee the world how fair! how strongly strikes  
Ambition! and gay Pleasure stronger still!  
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt that lays  
Thy virtue dead! be these my triple theme;  
Now shall thy wit or wisdom be forgot.

Common the theme, not so the song, if she  
My song invoke, Urania! deigns to smile.  
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,  
If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once,  
Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes;  
Scenes where these sparks of night, these stars,  
shall shine

Unnumber'd suns? (for all things, as they are,  
The blest behold) and, in one glory, pour  
Their blended blaze on man's astonish'd sight;  
A blaze—the least illustrious object there.

Lorenzo! since eternal is at hand,  
To swallow time's ambitions, as the vast  
Leviathan, the bubbles vain that ride  
High on the foaming billow, what avail  
High titles, high descent, attainments high,  
If unattain'd our highest? O Lorenzo!  
What lofty thoughts, these elements above,  
What towering hopes, what sallies from the sun,  
What grand surveys of destiny divine,

And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,  
Should roll in bosoms, where a spirit burns,  
Bound for eternity! in bosoms read  
By him who foibles in archangels sees!  
On human hearts he bends a jealous eye,  
And marks, and in Heaven's register enrolls,  
The rise and progress of each option there;  
Sacred to Doomsday! that the page unfolds,  
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine?  
This world! and this, unrivall'd by the skies!  
A world where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,  
Three demons that divide its realms between them,  
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro  
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball,  
Till, with the giddy circle sick and tir'd,  
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.  
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above  
That glorious promise angels were esteem'd  
Too mean to bring; a promise their Ador'd  
Descended to communicate, and press,  
By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.  
Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom wooes,  
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;  
A pillow which, like opiates ill prepar'd,  
Intoxicates, but not composes; fills  
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,  
All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest;  
What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy!.

How frail men, things! how momentary both!  
Fantastic chase of shadows hunting shades!  
The gay, the busy, equal, though unlike;

Equal in wisdom, differently wise!  
Through flowery meadows, and through dreary  
wastes,

One bustling, and one dancing, into death.  
There's not a day but, to the man of thought,  
Betrays some secret that throws new reproach  
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.  
The scenes of business tell us—'What are men;'  
The scenes of pleasure—'What is all beside?'  
There others we despise; and here ourselves.  
Amid disgust eternal dwells delight?—

'Tis approbation strikes the string of joy.

What wondrous prize has kindled this career,  
Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the dust,  
On life's gay stage, one inch above the grave?  
The proud run up and down in quest of eyes;  
The sensual in pursuit of something worse;  
The grave of gold; the politic of power;  
And all of other butterflies as vain!  
As eddies draw things frivolous and light,  
How is man's heart by vanity drawn in!  
On the swift circle of returning toys  
Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and then  
ingulf'd,

Where gay delusion darkens to despair!

'This is a beaten track.'—Is this a track  
Should not be beaten? never beat enough,  
Till enough learn'd the truths it would inspire.  
Shall Truth be silent because Folly frowns?  
Turn the world's history, what find we there  
But Fortune's sports, or Nature's cruel claims,  
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,



And endless inhumanities on man!  
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds but, like the knell,  
It brings sad tidings: how it hourly blows  
Man's misadventures round the list'ning world!  
Man is the tale of narrative old Time;  
Sad tale, which high as Paradise begins;  
As if, the toil of travel to delude,  
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,  
The Days, his daughters, as they spin our hours  
On Fortune's wheel, where accident unthought  
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,  
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,  
With now and then a wretched farce between,  
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us;  
Not one but puts some cheat on all mankind:  
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,  
They flatter our fond hopes, and promise much  
Of amiable, but hold him not o'er-wise  
Who dares to trust them, and laugh round the year,  
At still-confiding, still-confounded, man;  
Confiding, though confounded; hoping on,  
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,  
And ever looking for the never-seen:  
Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies,  
Nor owns itself a cheat till it expires.  
Its little joys go out by one and one,  
And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night;  
Night darker than what now involves the pole.

O thou, who dost permit these ills to fall,  
For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should  
mourn!

O thou, whose hands this goodly fabric fram'd,  
Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should  
    know;

What is this sublunary world? a vapour;  
A vapour all it holds; itself a vapour;  
From the damp bed of Chaos, by thy beam  
Exhal'd, ordain'd to swim its destin'd hour  
In ambient air, then melt and disappear.  
Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom;  
As mortal, though less transient, than her sons;  
Yet they dote on her as the world and they  
Were both eternal, solid, thou a dream.

They dote on what? immortal views apart,  
A region of outsides! a land of shadows!  
A fruitful field of flowery promises!  
A wilderness of joys! perplex'd with doubts,  
And sharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, spread  
With bold adventurers, their all on board;  
No second hope, if here their fortune frowns;  
Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,  
Of ensigns various; all alike in this,  
All restless, anxious, toss'd with hopes and fears  
In calmest skies; obnoxious all to storm,  
And stormy the most general blast of life:  
All bound for happiness; yet few provide  
The chart of Knowledge, pointing where it lies,  
Or Virtue's helm, to shape the course design'd:  
All, more or less, capricious Fate lament,  
Now lifted by the tide, and now resorb'd,  
And farther from their wishes than before:  
All, more or less, against each other dash,  
To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion driven,

And suffering more from folly than from Fate.

Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home  
Of dangers, at eternal war with man!  
Death's capital, where most he domineers,  
With all his chosen terrors frowning round,  
(Though lately feasted high at Albion's cost\*)  
Wide-opening, and loud-roaring still for more!  
Too faithful mirror! how dost thou reflect  
The melancholy face of human life!  
The strong resemblance tempts me farther still:  
And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck  
By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,  
Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope,  
When young, with sanguine cheer and streamers  
    gay,  
We cut our cable, launch into the world,  
And fondly dream each wind and star our friend:  
All in some darling enterprise embark'd;  
But where is he can fathom its event?  
Amid a multitude of artless hands,  
Ruin's sure perquisite! her lawful prize!  
Some steer aright, but the black blast blows hard,  
And puffs them wide of hope: with hearts of proof,  
Full against wind and tide, some win their way;  
And when strong effort has deserv'd the port,  
And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won! 'tis lost!  
Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate:  
They strike! and, while they triumph, they expire.  
In stress of weather most, some sink outright;

\* Admiral Balchen, &c.

O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close;  
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.  
Others a short memorial leave behind,  
Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulf'd;  
It floats a moment, and is seen no more.  
One Cæsar lives: a thousand are forgot.  
How few, beneath auspicious planets born,  
(Darlings of Providence! fond Fate's elect!)  
With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,  
With all their wishes freighted! yet ev'n these,  
Freighted with all their wishes, soon complain:  
Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,  
They still are men; and when is man secure?  
As fatal time as storm! the rush of years  
Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes  
In ruin end. And now their proud success  
But plants new terrors on the victor's brow:  
What pain to quit the world, just made their own,  
Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high!  
Too low they build who build beneath the stars.

Woe then apart (if woe apart can be  
From mortal man) and Fortune at our nod,  
The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and august!  
What are they?—The most happy (strange to say!)  
Convince me most of human misery.  
What are they? smiling wretches of to-morrow!  
More wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be;  
Their treacherous blessings, at the day of need,  
Like other faithless friends, unmask and sting:  
Then what provoking indigence in wealth!  
What aggravated impotence in power!  
High titles, then, what insult of their pain!

If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,  
Immortal Hope! defies not the rude storm,  
Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage,  
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires?—  
' But here (thou say'st) the miseries of life  
Are huddled in a group. A more distinct  
Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.'  
Look on life's stages; they speak plainer still;  
The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.  
Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold  
The best that can befall the best on earth;  
The boy has virtue by his mother's side:  
Yes, on Florello look: a father's heart  
Is tender, though the man's is made of stone:  
The truth, through such a medium seen, may make  
Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

Florello! lately cast on this rude coast  
A helpless infant, now a heedless child.  
To poor Clarissa's throes thy care succeeds:  
Care full of love, and yet severe as hate!  
O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns!  
Needful austerities his will restrain,  
As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.  
As yet his reason cannot go alone,  
But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.  
His little heart is often terrified;  
The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale;  
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,  
His harmless eye! and drowns an angel there.  
Ah! what avails his innocence? the task  
Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers;

He learns to sigh ere he is known to sin;  
Guiltless, and sad! a wretch before the fall!  
How cruel this! more cruel to forbear.  
Our nature such, with necessary pains  
We purchase prospects of precarious peace:  
Though not a father, this might steal a sigh.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright (if not  
'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still)  
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,  
He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world;  
The world is taken, after ten years toil,  
Like ancient Troy, and all its joys his own.  
Alas! the world's a tutor more severe;  
Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains:  
Unteaching all his virtuous Nature taught,  
Or books (fair Virtue's advocates!) inspir'd.

For who receives him into public life?  
Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,  
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,  
(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)  
And in their hospitable arms enclose;  
Men who think nought so strong of the romance,  
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend;  
Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,  
All weakness of affection quite subdu'd;  
Men that would blush at being thought sincere,  
And feign, for glory, the few faults they want;  
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well,  
As if, to them, Vice shone her own reward.

Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?  
Such, for Florello's sake, 'twill now appear.  
See the steel'd files of season'd veterans,

Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright;  
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace,  
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off;  
All their keen purpose in politeness sheath'd;  
His friends eternal—during interest;  
His foes implacable—when worth their while;  
At war with every welfare but their own;  
As wise as Lucifer, and half as good;  
And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain—  
Naked through these (so common fate ordains)  
Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,  
Stung out of all most amiable in life,  
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles un-  
feign'd;

Affection, as his species wide diffus'd,  
Noble presumptions to mankind's renown,  
Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)  
Will cost him many sighs, till time and pains,  
From the slow mistress of this school, Experience,  
And her assistant, pausing, pale Distrust,  
Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth  
Through serpentine obliquities of life,  
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.  
And happy! if the clue shall come so cheap;  
For while we learn to fence with public guilt,  
Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,  
If less than heavenly virtue is our guard.  
Thus a strange kind of curs'd necessity  
Brings down the sterling temper of his soul,  
By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,  
Below call'd Wisdom; sinks him into safety,

And brands him into credit with the world,  
Where specious titles dignify disgrace,  
And Nature's injuries are arts of life;  
Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes,  
And heavenly talents make infernal hearts,  
That insurmountable extreme of guilt!

Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,  
Forgot that Genius need not go to school;  
Forgot that man, without a tutor wise,  
His plan had practis'd long before 'twas writ.  
The world's all title-page; there's no contents.  
The world's all face: the man who shows his heart  
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.  
A man I knew who liv'd upon a smile,  
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair,  
While rankest venom foam'd through every vein.  
Lorenzo! what I tell thee take not ill!  
Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive;  
And, dying, curs'd the friend on whom he liv'd.  
To such proficient thou art half a saint.  
In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)  
How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,  
Studious their nests to feather in a trice,  
With all the necromantics of their art,  
Playing the game of faces on each other,  
Making court sweetmeats of their latent gall,  
In foolish hope to steal each other's trust;  
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd;  
And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!  
Their parts we doubt not, but be that their shame.  
Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,  
Stoop to mean wiles that would disgrace a fool,



And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?  
For who can thank the man he cannot see?

Why so much cover? it defeats itself.

Ye that know all things! know ye not men's hearts  
Are therefore known because they are conceal'd?  
For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell.  
I give him joy that's awkward at a lie;  
Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe;  
His incapacity is his renown.

'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise;  
It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength.  
Thou say'st 'tis needful! is it therefore right?  
Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace  
To strain at an excuse: and wouldst thou, then,  
Escape that cruel need? thou may'st with ease;  
Think no post needful that demands a knave.  
When late our Civil helm was shifting hands,  
So Pelham thought: think better if you can.

But this how rare! the public path of life  
Is dirty:—yet allow that dirt its due,  
It makes the noble mind more noble still.  
The world's no neuter; it will wound or save;  
Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.  
You say the world, well-known, will make a man.—  
The world, well-known, will give our hearts to  
Heaven,

Or make us demons, long before we die.

To show how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,  
Take either part, sure ills attend the choice;  
Sure, though not equal, detriment ensues.  
Not Virtue's self is deified on earth;  
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes;

Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.  
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.  
True friends to virtue last and least complain;  
But if they sigh, can others hope to smile?  
If Wisdom has her miseries to mourn,  
How can poor Folly lead a happy life?  
And if both suffer, what has Earth to boast,  
Where he most happy who the least laments?  
Where much, much patience, the most envied state,  
And some forgiveness, needs, the best of friends?  
For friend or happy life who looks not higher,  
Of neither shall we find the shadow here.

The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,  
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies:  
' Thus far thy song is right, and all must own  
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains:—  
And joys peculiar who to Vice denies?  
If vice it is with Nature to comply:  
If pride and sense are so predominant,  
To check, not overcome them, makes a saint.  
Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim  
Pleasure and glory the chief good of man?  
Can pride and sensuality rejoice?  
From purity of thought all pleasure springs,  
And from an humble spirit all our peace.  
Ambition, Pleasure! let us talk of these;  
Of these the Porch and Academy talk'd;  
Of these each following age had much to say;  
Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.  
Who talks of these, to mankind all at once  
He talks; for where the saint from either free?  
Are these thy refuge?—No; these rush upon thee,

Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, devour.  
I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy rock,  
Prometheus! from this barren ball of earth,  
If Reason can unchain thee, thou art free.

And first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls;  
Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!  
Of courted woes! and courted through mistake!  
'Tis not Ambition charms thee; 'tis a cheat  
Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.  
Dost grasp at greatness? first know what it is.  
Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies?  
Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,  
By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng,  
Is glory lodg'd: 'tis lodg'd in the reverse;  
In that which joins, in that which equals all,  
The monarch and his slave,—' a deathless soul,  
Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,  
A Father-God, and brothers in the skies;'  
Elder, indeed, in time, but less remote  
In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man:  
Why greater what can fall than what can rise?

If still delirious, now, Lorenzo! go,  
And, with thy full-blown brothers of the world,  
Throw scorn around thee; cast it on thy slaves,  
Thy slaves and equals. How scorn cast on them  
Rebounds on thee! If man is mean, as man,  
Art thou a god? if Fortune makes him so,  
Beware the consequence: a maxim that  
Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,  
Where, in the drapery, the man is lost;  
Externals fluttering, and the soul forgot.  
Thy greatest glory, when dispos'd to boast,

Boast that aloud in which thy servants share.

We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy:  
Judge we, in their caparisons, of men?  
It nought avails thee where, but what, thou art.  
All the distinctions of this little life  
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man.  
When through Death's streights earth's subtle  
    serpents creep,  
Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,  
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,  
They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,  
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft  
Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.  
Of Fortune's fucus strip them, yet alive,  
Strip them of body too; nay, closer still,  
Away with all but moral in their minds,  
And let what then remains impose their name,  
Pronounce them weak or worthy, great or mean.  
How mean that snuff of glory Fortune lights,  
And Death puts out! Dost thou demand a test,  
A test, at once, infallible and short,  
Of real greatness? that man greatly lives,  
Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies;  
High flush'd with hope where heroes shall despair.  
If this a true criterion, many courts,  
Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

The' Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys  
Nought greater than an honest, humble heart;  
An humble heart, his residence! pronounc'd  
His second seat, and rival to the skies.  
The private path, the secret acts of men,  
If noble, far the noblest of our lives!

How far above Lorenzo's glory sits  
The' illustrious master of a name unknown?  
Whose worth unrivall'd, and unwitness'd, loves  
Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men,  
And peace, beyond the world's conception, smiles!  
As thou (now dark) before we part shalt see.

But thy great soul this skulking glory scorns.  
Lorenzo's sick, but when Lorenzo's seen,  
And when he shrugs at public business lies.  
Denied the public eye, the public voice,  
As if he liv'd on others' breath, he dies.  
Fain would he make the world his pedestal,  
Mankind the gazers, the sole figure he.  
Knows he that mankind praise against their will,  
And mix as much detraction as they can?  
Knows he that faithless Fame her whisper has,  
As well as trumpet? that his vanity  
Is so much tickled from not hearing all?  
Knows this all-knower that from itch of praise,  
Or from an itch more sordid, when he shines,  
Taking his country by five hundred ears,  
Senates at once admire him and despise,  
With modest laughter lining loud applause,  
Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame?  
His fame which (like the mighty Cæsar) crown'd  
With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,  
By seeming friends, that honour and destroy.  
We rise in glory as we sink in pride.  
Where boasting ends, there dignity begins;  
And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake,  
The blind Lorenzo's proud—of being proud,  
And dreams himself ascending in his fall.

An eminence, though fancied, turns the brain;  
All vice wants hellebore; but of all vice  
Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl;  
Because, unlike all other vice, it flies,  
In fact, the point in fancy most pursued.  
Who court applause oblige the world in this,  
They gratify man's passion to refuse.  
Superior honour, when assum'd, is lost:  
Ev'n good men turn banditti, and rejoice,  
Like Kouli-Kan, in plunder of the proud.

Though somewhat disconcerted, steady still  
To the world's cause; with half a face of joy,  
Lorenzo cries—' Be, then, Ambition cast;  
Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,  
Gay Pleasure! proud Ambition is her slave;  
For her he soars at great, and hazards ill;  
For her he fights and bleeds, or overcomes,  
And paves his way with crowns to reach her smile.  
Who can resist her charms?'—or should? Lorenzo!  
What mortals shall resist where angels yield?  
Pleasure's the mistress of ethereal powers;  
For her contend the rival gods above;  
Pleasure's the mistress of the world below,  
And well it is for man that Pleasure charms;  
How would all stagnate but for Pleasure's ray!  
How would the frozen stream of action cease!  
What is the pulse of this so busy world?  
The love of pleasure; that, through every vein,  
Throws motion, warmth, and shuts out death from  
life.

Though various are the tempers of mankind,  
Pleasure's gay family holds all in chains.

Some most affect the black, and some the fair;  
Some honest pleasure court, and some obscene.  
Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng  
Of passions that can err in human hearts,  
Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.  
Think you there's but one whoredom? whoredom  
all,

But when our reason licences delight.  
Dost doubt, Lorenzo? thou shalt doubt no more.  
Thy father chides thy gallantries, yet hugs  
An ugly, common harlot in the dark,  
A rank adulterer with others' gold;  
And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner charms.  
Hatred her brothel has, as well as Love,  
Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.  
Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the mark:  
For her the black assassin draws his sword;  
For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,  
To which no single sacrifice may fall;  
For her the saint abstains, the miser starves;  
The stoic proud, for Pleasure, pleasure scorn'd;  
For her Affliction's daughters grief indulge,  
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears;  
For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy;  
And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death:  
Thus universal her despotic power.

And as her empire wide, her praise is just.  
Patron of Pleasure! Doter on delight!  
I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;  
Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song.  
Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name;  
I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low:

Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower;  
And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence,  
If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name.

How knits Austerity her cloudy brow,  
And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praise  
Of pleasure, to mankind unprais'd, too dear!

Ye modern stoics! hear my soft reply;  
Their senses men will trust: we can't impose,  
Or, if we could, is imposition right?

Own honey sweet, but, owning, add this sting,  
'When mix'd with poison it is deadly too.'

Truth never was indebted to a lie.

Is nought but virtue to be prais'd as good?

Why then is health preferr'd before disease?

What Nature loves is good, without our leave;

And where no future drawback cries, 'Beware,'

Pleasure, though not from virtue, should prevail:

'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heaven.

How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!

The love of Pleasure is man's eldest-born,

Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;

Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave,

Was meant to minister, and not to mar,

Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.

Lorenzo! thou, her majesty's renown'd,

Though uncoift counsel, learned in the world!

Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain

May'st look on me: yet, my Demosthenes\*!

Canst thou plead Pleasure's cause as well as I?

\* A famous Grecian Orator.



Know'st thou her nature, purpose, parentage?  
Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;  
And know thyself; and know thyself to be  
(Strange truth!) the most abstemious man alive.  
'Tell not Calista, she will laugh thee dead,  
Or send thee to her hermitage with L——.  
Absurd presumption! thou who never knew'st  
A serious thought! shalt thou dare dream of joy?  
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,  
Or yawn'd it into being with a wish;  
Or with the snout of grovelling Appetite  
E'er smelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.  
An art it is, and must be learn'd; and learn'd  
With unremitting effort, or be lost,  
And leave us perfect blockheads in our bliss.  
The clouds may drop down titles and estates;  
Wealth may seek us; but wisdom must be sought;  
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else  
We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain.

First, Pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur, see;  
Brought forth by Wisdom, nurs'd by Discipline,  
By Patience taught, by Perseverance crown'd,  
She rears her head majestic; round her throne,  
Erected, in the bosom of the just,  
Each virtue, listed, forms her manly guard.  
For what are virtues? (formidable name!)  
What but the fountain or defence of joy?  
Why then commanded? need mankind commands,  
At once to merit and to make their bliss?—  
Great Legislator! scarce so great as kind!

If men are rational, and love delight,  
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice:  
In the transgression lies the penalty;  
And they the most indulge who most obey.

Of Pleasure, next, the final cause explore;  
Its mighty purpose, its important end.  
Not to turn human brutal, but to build  
Divine on human, Pleasure came from Heaven:  
In aid to reason was the goddess sent,  
To call up all its strength by such a charm.  
Pleasure, first, succours Virtue; in return,  
Virtue gives Pleasure an eternal reign.  
What but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,  
Supports life natural, civil, and divine?  
'Tis from the pleasure of repast we live;  
'Tis from the pleasure of applause we please;  
'Tis from the pleasure of belief we pray:  
(All pray'r would cease, if unbeliev'd the prize)  
It serves ourselves, our species, and our God;  
And to serve more is past the sphere of man.  
Glide then, for ever, Pleasure's sacred stream!  
Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,  
And fosters every growth of happy life;  
Makes a new Eden where it flows,—but such  
As must be lost, Lorenzo! by thy fall.

‘What mean I by thy fall?’—Thou’lt shortly see,  
While Pleasure's nature is at large display'd,  
Already sung her origin and ends:  
Those glorious ends by kind, or by degree,  
When Pleasure violates, 'tis then a vice,  
And vengeance too; it hastens into pain.  
From due refreshment life, health, reason, joy;

From wild excess pain, grief, distraction, death;  
Heaven's justice this proclaims, and that her love.  
What greater evil can I wish my foe,  
Than his full draught of pleasure from a cask  
Unbroach'd by just authority, ungaug'd  
By temperance, by reason unrefin'd?  
A thousand demons lurk within the lee.  
Heaven, others, and ourselves! uninjur'd these,  
Drink deep; the deeper, then, the more divine:  
Angels are angels from indulgence there.  
'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god.

Dost think thyself a god from other joys?  
A victim rather! shortly sure to bleed.  
The wrong must mourn. Can Heaven's appoint-  
ments fail?

Can man outwit Omnipotence? strike out  
A self-wrought happiness, unmeant by him  
Who made us, and the world we would enjoy?  
Who forms an instrument ordains from whence  
Its dissonance or harmony shall rise.  
Heaven bid the soul this mortal frame inspire;  
Bid Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul  
With unprecarious flows of vital joy;  
And, without breathing, man as well might hope  
For life, as, without piety, for peace.

'Is virtue, then, and piety, the same?'—  
No; piety is more; 'tis virtue's source,  
Mother of every worth, as that of joy.  
Men of the world this doctrine ill digest;  
They smile at piety, yet boast aloud  
Good will to men, nor know they strive to part  
What Nature joins, and thus confute themselves.

With piety begins all good on earth;  
'Tis the first-born of Rationality.  
Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies;  
Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good;  
A feign'd affection bounds her utmost power,  
Some we can't love, but for the' Almighty's sake;  
A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man:  
Some sinister intent taints all he does,  
And in his kindest actions he's unkind.

On piety humanity is built,  
And on humanity much happiness;  
And yet still more on piety itself.  
A soul in commerce with her God is Heaven,  
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,  
The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.  
A Deity believ'd is joy begun;  
A Deity ador'd is joy advanc'd;  
A Deity belov'd is joy matur'd.  
Each branch of piety delight inspires;  
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,  
O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides:  
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,  
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still:  
Pray'r ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream  
Of glory on the consecrated hour  
Of man, in audience with the Deity.  
Who worships the Great God that instant joins  
The first in Heaven, and sets his foot on hell.

Lorenzo! when wast thou at church before?  
Thou think'st the service long: but is it just?  
Though just, unwelcome: thou hadst rather tread  
Unhallow'd ground; the muse, to win thine ear,

Must take an air less solemn. She complies.  
Good Conscience! at the sound the world retires;  
Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles;  
Yet has she her seraglio full of charms,  
And such as age shall heighten, not impair.  
Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercast?  
Amid her fair ones thou the fairest choose  
To chase thy gloom—' Go, fix some weighty truth;  
Chain down some passion; do some generous good;  
Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to smile;  
Correct thy friend; befriend thy greatest foe;  
Or, with warm heart and confidence divine,  
Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made  
thee.'

Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow,  
Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,  
Loud mirth, mad laughter? Wretched comforters!  
Physicians! more than half of thy disease.  
Laughter, though never censur'd yet as sin,  
(Pardon a thought that only seems severe)  
Is half-immoral: is it much indulg'd?  
By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,  
It shows a scorner, or it makes a fool,  
And sins, as hurting others, or ourselves.  
'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw  
That tickles little minds to mirth effuse;  
Of grief approaching the portentous sign!  
The house of laughter makes a house of woe.  
A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;  
A man dejected is a sight as mean.  
What cause for triumph where such ills abound?

What for dejection where presides a power  
Who call'd us into being to be bless'd?  
So grieve, as conscious grief may rise to joy;  
So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.  
Most true a wise man never will be sad;  
But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,  
A shallow stream of happiness betray;  
Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.

Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expense)  
This counsel strange should I presume to give—  
'Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.'  
There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace;  
Ah! do not prize them less because inspir'd,  
As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.  
If not inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood  
Time's treasure! and the wonder of the wise!  
Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake;  
Alas!—should men mistake thee for a fool;—  
What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,  
Though tender of thy fame, could interpose?  
Believe me sense, here, acts a double part,  
And the true critic is a Christian too.

But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.  
True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first.  
They first themselves offend who greatly please,  
And travel only gives us sound repose.  
Heaven sells all pleasure; effort is the price.  
The joys of conquest are the joys of man;  
And Glory the victorious laurel spreads  
O'er Pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream.

There is a time when toil must be preferr'd,  
Or joy, by mistim'd fondness, is undone.

A man of pleasure is a man of pains.  
Thou wilt not take the trouble to be bless'd.  
False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought:  
From thought's full bent and energy the true;  
And that demands a mind in equal poize,  
Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.  
Much joy not only speaks small happiness,  
But happiness that shortly must expire.  
Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand?  
And, in a tempest, can reflection live?  
Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour?  
Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd?  
Or ope the door to honest poverty?  
Or talk with threatening Death, and not turn pale?  
In such a world, and such a nature, these  
Are needful fundamentals of delight:  
These fundamentals give delight indeed;  
Delight pure, delicate, and durable;  
Delight unshaken, masculine, divine;  
A constant and a sound, but serious joy.  
Is joy the daughter of Severity?  
It is:—yet far my doctrine from severe.  
' Rejoice for ever;' it becomes a man;  
Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.  
' Rejoice for ever,' Nature cries, ' Rejoice;'  
And drinks to man in her nectarious cup,  
Mix'd up of delicates for every sense;  
To the great Founder of the bounteous feast  
Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise;  
And he that will not pledge her is a churl.  
Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,  
Is the whole science of felicity:

Yet sparing pledge; her bowl is not the best  
Mankind can boast.—‘ A rational repast,  
Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,  
A military discipline of thought,  
To foil temptation in the doubtful field,  
And ever-waking ardour for the right.’  
’Tis these first give, then guard, a cheerful heart.  
Nought that is right think little, well aware  
What Reason bids, God bids; by his command  
How aggrandiz’d the smallest thing we do!  
Thus nothing is insipid to the wise;  
To thee insipid all but what is mad,  
Joys season’d high, and tasting strong of guilt.

‘ Mad! (thou reply’st, with indignation fir’d)  
Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,  
I follow Nature.’—Follow Nature still,  
But look it be thine own. Is Conscience, then,  
No part of Nature? is she not supreme?  
Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!  
Then follow Nature, and resemble God.

When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursued,  
Man’s nature is unnaturally pleas’d;  
And what’s unnatural is painful too  
At intervals, and must disgust ev’n thee!  
The fact thou know’st; but not, perhaps, the cause.  
Virtue’s foundations with the world’s were laid;  
Heaven mix’d her with our make, and twisted close  
Her sacred interests with the strings of life:  
Who breaks her awful mandate shocks himself,  
His better self: and is it greater pain  
Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine?  
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.



If one must suffer, which should least be spar'd?  
The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense.  
Ask, then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt?—  
The joys of sense to mental joys are mean:  
Sense on the present only feeds; the soul  
On past and future forages for joy:  
'Tis her's, by retrospect, through time to range,  
And forward time's great sequel to survey.  
Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,  
Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall.  
Guard, then, thy mind, and leave the rest to Fate.

Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?  
The man is dead who for the body lives,  
Lur'd by the beating of his pulse, to list  
With every lust that wars against his peace,  
And sets him quite at variance with himself.  
Thyself first know, then love: a self there is,  
Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms:  
A self there is as fond of every vice,  
While every virtue wounds it to the heart;  
Humility degrades it, Justice robs,  
Blest Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,  
And god-like Magnanimity destroys.  
This self, when rival to the former, scorn;  
When not in competition, kindly treat,  
Defend it, feed it:—but when Virtue bids,  
Toss it or to the fowls or to the flames.  
And why? 'tis love of pleasure bids thee bleed;  
Comply, or own self-love extinct, or blind.

For what is vice? self-love in a mistake:  
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.  
And virtue, what? 'tis self-love in her wits,

Quite skilful in the market of delight.  
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread power  
From whom she springs, and all she can enjoy.  
Other self-love is but disguis'd self-hate,  
More mortal than the malice of our foes;  
A self-hate now scarce felt, then felt full sore,  
When being curst, extinction loud implor'd,  
And every thing preferr'd to what we are.

Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice,  
And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.  
How is his want of happiness betray'd  
By disaffection to the present hour!  
Imagination wanders far a-field;  
The future pleases: why? the present pains.—  
'But that's a secret.'—Yes, which all men know,  
And know from thee, discover'd unawares.  
The ceaseless agitation, restless rolls  
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause.  
What is it?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,  
From Instinct sent, to rock her in disease,  
Which her physician, Reason, will not cure.  
A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while  
It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies!  
The weak have remedies, the wise have joys.  
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.  
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise?  
Consistent wisdom ever wills the same;  
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.  
Sick of herself is Folly's character,  
As Wisdom's is a modest self-applause,  
A change of evils is thy good supreme,

Nor but in motion canst thou find thy rest.  
Man's greatest strength is shown in standing still.  
The first sure symptom of a mind in health  
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.  
False pleasure from abroad her joys imports;  
Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the true.  
The true is fix'd and solid as a rock;  
Slippery the false, and tossing as the wave.  
This, a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain;  
That like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy,  
Home-contemplation her supreme delight:  
She dreads an interruption from without,  
Smit with her own condition, and the more  
Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

No man is happy till he thinks on earth  
There breathes not a more happy than himself:  
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all;  
And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.  
Such angels all entitled to repose  
On him who governs fate. Though tempest frowns,  
Though Nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heaven!  
To lean on him on whom archangels lean!  
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,  
They stand collecting every beam of thought,  
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight;  
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old  
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to Heaven;  
Hence are they studious of sequester'd scenes,  
While noise and dissipation comfort thee.

Were all men happy, revellings would cease,  
That opiate for inquietude within.  
Lorenzo! never man was truly bless'd,

But it compos'd and gave him such a cast,  
As Folly might mistake for want of joy:  
A cast unlike the triumph of the proud;  
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.  
O for a joy from thy Philander's spring!  
A spring perennial, rising in the breast,  
And permanent as pure! no turbid stream  
Of rapturous exultation, swelling high;  
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while  
Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.  
What does the man who transient joy prefers?  
What but prefer the bubbles to the stream?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight,  
Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.  
Joy's a fix'd state; a tenure, not a start.  
Bliss there is none but unprecarious bliss:  
That is the gem: sell all, and purchase that.  
Why go a begging to contingencies,  
Not gain'd with ease, nor safely lov'd, if gain'd?  
At good fortuitous draw back, and pause;  
Suspect it; what thou canst ensure, enjoy;  
And nought but what thou giv'st thyself is sure.  
Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives,  
And makes it as immortal as herself:  
To mortals nought immortal but their worth.

Worth, conscious Worth! should absolutely reign,  
And other joys ask leave for their approach,  
Nor unexamin'd ever leave obtain.  
Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys  
Wage war, and perish in intestine broils;  
Not the least promise of internal peace!  
No bosom-comfort! or unborrow'd bliss!

Thy thoughts are vagabonds; all outward-bound,  
Mid sands and rocks, and storms, to cruise for  
pleasure;

If gain'd, dear bought; and better miss'd than gain'd.  
Much pain must expiate what much pain procur'd.  
Fancy and sense, from an infected shore,  
Thy cargo bring, and pestilence the prize.  
Then such thy thirst (insatiable thirst!  
By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more!)  
Fancy still cruises, when poor Sense is tir'd.

Imagination is the Paphian shop  
Where feeble Happiness, like Vulcan, lame,  
Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,  
And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)  
With wanton art those fatal arrows form,  
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.  
Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there  
are

On angel-wing, descending from above,  
Which these, with art divine, would counter-work,  
And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In this is seen Imagination's guilt,  
But who can count her follies? she betrays thee,  
To think in grandeur there is something great.  
For works of curious art, and ancient fame,  
Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd,  
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.  
Hence what disaster!—Though the price was paid,  
That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,  
Whose foot (yegods!) though cloven, must be kiss'd,  
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore;  
(Such is the fate of honest protestants!)

And poor Magnificence is starv'd to death.  
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—  
Be pacified; if outward things are great,  
'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn;  
Pompous expenses, and parades august,  
And courts, that insalubrious soil to peace.  
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye;  
True happiness resides in things unseen.  
No smiles of Fortune ever bless'd the bad,  
Nor can her frowns rob Innocence of joys;  
That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor:  
So tell his Holiness, and be reveng'd.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good;  
Our only contest what deserves the name.  
Give Pleasure's name to nought but what has pass'd  
The' authentic seal of Reason (which, like Yorke,  
Demurs on what it passes) and defies  
The tooth of Time; when past, a pleasure still;  
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,  
And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes  
Our future, while it forms our present, joy.  
Some joys the future overcast, and some  
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.  
Some joys endear eternity; some give  
Abhor'd Annihilation dreadful charms.  
Are rival joys contending for thy choice?  
Consult thy whole existence, and be safe;  
That oracle will put all doubt to flight.  
Short is the lesson, though my lecture long;  
Be good—and let Heaven answer for the rest.

Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant,  
In this our day of proof, our land of hope,

The good man has his clouds that intervene;  
Clouds that obscure his sublunary day,  
But never conquer: ev'n the best must own,  
Patience and resignation are the pillars  
Of human peace on earth: the pillars these,  
But those of Seth not more remote from thee,  
Till this heroic lesson thou hast learn'd,  
To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.  
Fir'd at the prospect of unclouded bliss,  
Heaven in reversion, like the sun, as yet  
Beneath the' horizon, cheers us in this world;  
It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,  
The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

‘ This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue;  
But can harangues blow back strong Nature's  
stream?

Or stem the tide Heaven pushes through our veins,  
Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,  
And lays his labour level with the world?’

Themselves men make their comment on man-  
kind,

And think nought is but what they find at home:  
Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.  
Nothing romantic has the Muse prescrib'd:  
Above\*, Lorenzo saw the man of earth,  
The mortal man, and wretched was the sight.  
To balance that, to comfort and exalt,  
Now see the man immortal; him, I mean,  
Who lives as such; whose heart, full-bent on Heaven,  
Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.

\* In a former Night.

The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise  
His lustre more, though bright, without a foil:  
Observe his awful portrait, and admire;  
Nor stop at wonder; imitate, and live.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,  
What nothing less than angel can exceed,  
A man on earth devoted to the skies;  
Like ships in seas, while in, above the world.

With aspect mild, and elevated eye,  
Behold him seated on a mount serene,  
Above the fogs of sense, and passion's storm;  
All the black cares and tumults of this life,  
Like harmless thunders breaking at his feet,  
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.  
Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred and the slave,  
A mingled mob! a wandering herd! he sees,  
Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!  
His full reverse in all! what higher praise?  
What stronger demonstration of the right?

The present all their care, the future his.  
When public welfare calls, or private want,  
They give to Fame; his bounty he conceals.  
Their virtues varnish Nature, his exalt.  
Mankind's esteem they court, and he his own.  
Theirs the wild chase of false felicities;  
His the compos'd possession of the true.  
Alike throughout is his consistent piece,  
All of one colour, and an even thread;  
While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,  
With hideous gaps between, patch up for them  
A madman's robe; each puff of Fortune blows  
The tatters by, and shows their nakedness.



He sees with other eyes than theirs: where they  
Behold a sun, he spies a Deity.  
What makes them only smile, makes him adore.  
Where they see mountains, he but atoms sees.  
An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.  
They things terrestrial worship as divine;  
His hopes immortal blow them by as dust  
That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,  
Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound.  
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)  
He lays aside to find his dignity;  
No dignity they find in aught besides.  
They triumph in externals (which conceal  
Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse.  
Himself too much he prizes to be proud,  
And nothing thinks so great in man as man.  
Too dear he holds his interest to neglect  
Another's welfare, or his right invade;  
Their interest, like a lion, lives on prey.  
They kindle at the shadow of a wrong;  
Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on Heaven,  
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe.  
Nought but what wounds his virtue wounds his  
peace.

A cover'd heart their character defends;  
A cover'd heart denies him half his praise.  
With nakedness his innocence agrees,  
While their broad foliage testifies their fall.  
Their no-joys end where his full feast begins:  
His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss.  
To triumph in existence his alone;  
And his alone triumphantly to think

His true existence is not yet begun.  
His glorious course was, yesterday, complete;  
Death then was welcome; yet life still is sweet.  
But nothing charms Lorenzo like the firm,  
Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise?  
They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,  
And show no fortitude but in the field;  
If there they show it, 'tis for glory shown,  
Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.  
A cordial his sustains that cannot fail:  
By pleasure unsubdu'd, unbroke by pain,  
He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts;  
All-bearing, all attempting, till he falls,  
And when he falls, writes *Vici*\* on his shield.  
From magnanimity all fear above;  
From nobler recompense above applause,  
Which owes to man's short outlook all its charms.

Backward to credit what he never felt,  
Lorenzo cries,—‘Where shines this miracle?  
From what root rises this immortal man?’—  
A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground;  
The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.

He follows Nature (not like thee †!) and shows us  
An uninverted system of a man.  
His appetite wears Reason's golden chain,  
And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.  
His passion, like an eagle well-reclaim'd,  
Is taught to fly at nought but infinite.  
Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,  
His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief

\* I have conquered.

† See page 232, line 16.

The gods ordain) a stranger to despair,  
And why?—because affection, more than meet,  
His wisdom leaves not disengag'd from Heaven.  
Those secondary goods that smile on earth  
He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.  
They most the world enjoy who least admire.  
His understanding 'scapes the common cloud  
Of fumes arising from a boiling breast.  
His head is clear, because his heart is cool,  
By worldly competitions uninflam'd.  
The moderate movements of his soul admit  
Distinct ideas, and matur'd debate,  
An eye impartial, and an even scale;  
Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.  
Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise;  
On its own dunghill wiser than the world.  
What, then, the world? it must be doubly weak.  
Strange truth! as soon would they believe their  
creed.

Yet thus it is, nor otherwise can be,  
So far from aught romantic what I sing.  
Bliss has no being, Virtue has no strength,  
But from the prospect of immortal life.  
Who think Earth all, or (what weighs just the same)  
Who care no farther, must prize what it yields;  
Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.  
Who thinks Earth nothing can't its charms admire;  
He can't a foe, though most malignant, hate,  
Because that hate would prove his greater foe.  
'Tis hard for them (yet who so loudly boast  
Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friend;  
For may not he invade their good supreme,  
Where the least jealousy turns love to gall?

All shines to them, that for a season shines:  
Each act, each thought, he questions; ‘ What its  
weight,

Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?’—  
And what it there appears he deems it now;  
Hence pure are the recesses of his soul.  
The godlike man has nothing to conceal.  
His virtue, constitutionally deep,  
Has Habit’s firmness, and Affection’s flame;  
Angels, allied, descend to feed the fire;  
And death, which others slay, makes him a god.

And now, Lorenzo! bigot of this world!  
Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by Heaven!  
Stand by thy scorn, and be reduc’d to nought!  
For what art thou?—Thou boaster! while thy glare,  
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,  
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most;  
And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;  
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,  
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,  
By promise, now, and by possession, soon  
(Too soon, too much, it cannot be) his own.

From this thy just annihilation rise,  
Lorenzo! rise to something, by reply.  
The world, thy client, listens and expects,  
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.  
Canst thou be silent? no; for wit is thine,  
And Wit talks most when least she has to say,  
And reason interrupts not her career.  
She’ll say—that mists above the mountains rise,  
And with a thousand pleasantries amuse;  
She’ll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,  
And fly conviction in the dust she rais’d.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!  
'Tis precious as the vehicle of sense,  
But as its substitute a dire disease.  
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,  
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.  
Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;  
Passion can give it; sometimes wine inspires  
The lucky flash; and madness rarely fails.  
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs,  
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.  
For thy renown 'twere well was this the worst;  
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,  
See Dulness blundering on vivacities,  
Shakes her sage head at the calamity  
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.  
But Wisdom, awful Wisdom! which inspects,  
Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,  
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last,  
How rare! in senates, synods, sought in vain;  
Or if there found, 'tis sacred to the few;  
While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,  
Frequent as fatal, Wit. In civil life  
Wit makes an enterpriser, sense a man.  
Wit hates authority, commotion loves,  
And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.  
In states 'tis dangerous; in religion death.  
Shall Wit turn Christian when the dull believe?  
Sense is our helmet, Wit is but the plume;  
The plume exposes, 'tis our helmet saves.  
Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound;  
When cut by Wit it casts a brighter beam;  
Yet Wit apart, it is a diamond still.  
Wit, widow'd of good sense, is worse than nought;

It hoists more sail to run against a rock.  
Thus, a half-Chesterfield is quite a fool,  
Whom dull fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.

How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,  
Where sirens sit to sing thee to thy fate!  
A joy in which our reason bears no part,  
Is but a sorrow tickling ere it stings.  
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;  
Which of her lovers ever found her true?  
Happy! of this bad world who little know:—  
And yet we much must know her to be safe.  
To know the world, not love her, is thy point;  
She gives but little, nor that little long.  
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,  
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,  
Our thoughtless agitation's idle child,  
That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,  
Leaving the soul more vapid than before;  
An animal ovation! such as holds  
No commerce with our reason, but subsists  
On juices, through the well-ton'd tubes, well  
strain'd;

A nice machine! scarce ever tun'd aright;  
And when it jars—thy sirens sing no more;  
Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown  
(Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,  
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair.

Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,  
And startle at destruction? if thou art,  
Accept a buckler, take it to the field;  
(A field of battle is this mortal life!)  
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart,  
A single sentence proof against the world.

‘ Soul, body, fortune! every good pertains  
To one of these; but prize not all alike;  
The goods of fortune to thy body’s health,  
Body to soul, and soul submit to God.’  
Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? do this:  
The’ inverted pyramid can never stand.

Is this truth doubtful? it outshines the sun;  
Nay, the sun shines not but to show us this,  
The single lesson of mankind on earth:  
And yet—yet, what? No news! mankind is mad;  
Such mighty numbers list against the right  
(And what can’t numbers, when bewitch’d, achieve!)  
They talk themselves to something like belief  
That all earth’s joys are theirs; as Athens’ fool  
Grinn’d from the port on every sail his own.

They grin, but wherefore? and how long the  
laugh?

Half ignorance their mirth, and half a lie.  
To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they  
smile.

Hard either task! the most abandon’d own  
That others, if abandon’d, are undone:  
Then for themselves, the moment Reason wakes,  
(And Providence denies it long repose)  
O how laborious is their gaiety!  
They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen,  
Scarce muster patience to support the farce,  
And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.  
Scarce, did I say! some cannot sit it out;  
Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,  
And show us what their joy by their despair.

The clotted hair! gor’d breast! blaspheming eye!  
Its impious fury still alive in death!

Shut, shut the shocking scene.—But Heaven denies  
A cover to such guilt, and so should man.  
Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade,  
The' invenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;  
The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;  
The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays,  
From raging riot, (slower suicides!)  
And pride in these, more execrable still!  
How horrid all to thought!—but horrors, these,  
That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble song.

From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be bless'd;  
Bliss is too great, to lodge within an hour:  
When an immortal being aims at bliss,  
Duration is essential to the name.  
O for a joy from Reason! joy from that  
Which makes man man, and, exercis'd aright,  
Will make him more: a bounteous joy! that gives  
And promises; that weaves, with art divine,  
The richest prospect into present peace:  
A joy ambitious! joy in common held  
With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:  
A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death!  
A joy which death shall double, judgment crown!  
Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,  
Through bless'd eternity's long day, yet still  
Not more remote from sorrow than from him  
Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours  
So much of Deity on guilty dust.  
There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,  
Where not thy presence can improve my bliss!

Affects not this the sages of the world?  
Can nought affect them, but what fools them too?  
Eternity depending on an hour,



Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and  
praise.

Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs  
May shun the light) at your designs on Heaven;  
Sole point! where overbashful is your blame.

Are you not wise?—you know you are: yet hear  
One truth, amid your numerous schemes mislaid,  
Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen;

'Our schemes to plan by this world, or the next  
Is the sole difference between wise and fool.'

All worthy men will weigh you in this scale;  
What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?  
Is their esteem alone not worth your care?

Accept my simple scheme of common sense,  
Thus save your fame, and make two worlds your  
own.

The world replies not;—but the world persists,  
And puts the cause off to the longest day,  
Planning evasions for the day of doom:

So far, at that re-hearing, from redress,  
They then turn witnesses against themselves.

Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow.

Haste, haste! a man, by nature, is in haste;

For who shall answer for another hour?

'Tis highly prudent to make one sure friend,

And that thou canst not do this side the skies.

Ye sons of Earth! (nor willing to be more!)  
Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat  
free,

Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths  
(Truths which, at church, you might have heard  
in prose)

Has ventur'd into light, well-pleas'd the verse  
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain,  
And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.  
But praise she need not fear: I see my fate,  
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf.  
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,  
Must die, and die unwept; O thou minute,  
Devoted page! go forth among thy foes;  
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,  
And die a double death: mankind, incens'd,  
Denies thee long to live; nor shalt thou rest  
When thou art dead, in Stygian shades arraign'd  
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne,  
And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the World!  
The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,  
And volunteers around his banner swarm,  
Prudent as Prussia in her zeal for Gaul.

‘Are all, then, fools?’ Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all  
But such as hold this doctrine (new to thee)  
‘The mother of true wisdom is the will,’  
The noblest intellect a fool without it.  
World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,  
In arts and sciences, in wars and peace;  
But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,  
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.  
This is the most indulgence can afford,—  
‘Thy wisdom all can do but—make thee wise.’  
Nor think this censure is severe on thee;  
Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

THE  
**CONSOLATION.**

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*NIGHT IX.*

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CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS,

1. A MORAL SURVEY OF 'THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.
2. A NIGHT-ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

---

INSCRIBED TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

---

*Fatis contraria fata rependens.*

VIRG.

---

As when a traveller, a long day past  
In painful search of what he cannot find,  
At night's approach, content with the next cot,  
There ruminates a while his labour lost,  
Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords,  
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,  
Till the due season calls him to repose;  
Thus I, long travell'd in the ways of men,  
And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,  
Where Disappointment smiles at Hope's career,

Warn'd by the languor of life's evening ray,  
At length have hous'd me in an humble shed,  
Where, future wandering banish'd from my thought,  
And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,  
I chase the moments with a serious song.

Song soothes our pains, and age has pains to sooth.

When age, care, crime, and friends, embrac'd  
at heart,

Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark  
shade,

Which hovers o'er me, quench the' ethereal fire,  
Canst thou, O Night! indulge one labour more?  
One labour more indulge! then sleep, my strain!  
Till, haply, wak'd by Raphael's golden lyre,  
Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow  
cease,

To bear a part in everlasting lays;  
Though far, far higher set, in aim, I trust,  
Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

Has not the Muse asserted pleasures pure,  
Like those above, exploding other joys?  
Weigh what was urg'd, Lorenzo! fairly weigh,  
And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still?  
I think thou wilt forbear a boast so bold.  
But if, beneath the favour of mistake,  
Thy smiles sincere, not more sincere can be  
Lorenzo's smile than my compassion for him.  
The sick in body call for aid; the sick  
In mind are covetous of more disease,  
And when at worst, they dream themselves quite  
well.

To know ourselves diseas'd is half our cure.

When Nature's blush by custom is wip'd off,  
And conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes,  
Has into manners naturaliz'd our crimes,  
The curse of curses is our curse to love,  
To triumph in the blackness of our guilt  
(As Indians glory in the deepest jet)  
And throw aside our senses with our peace.

But grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy;  
Grant joy and glory quite unsullied shone;  
Yet, still, it ill deserves Lorenzo's heart.  
No joy, no glory, glitters in thy sight,  
But, through the thin partition of an hour,  
I see its sables wove by Destiny,  
And that in sorrow buried, this in shame,  
While howling furies ring the doleful knell,  
And Conscience, now so soft thou scarce canst hear  
Her whisper, echoes her eternal peal.

Where the prime actors of the last year's scene,  
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume?  
How many sleep, who kept the world awake  
With lustre and with noise! Has Death proclaim'd  
A truce, and hung his sated lance on high?  
'Tis brandish'd still, nor shall the present year  
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,  
Or spread, of feeble life, a thinner fall.

But needless monuments to wake the thought;  
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality,  
'Though in a style more florid, full as plain  
As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.  
What are our noblest ornaments, but Deaths  
Turn'd flatterers of Life in paint or marble,  
The well-stain'd canvass, or the featur'd stone?

Our fathers grace, or rather haunt the scene.  
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

‘ Profess’d diversions! cannot these escape?’—  
Far from it: these present us with a shroud,  
And talk of death, like garlands o’er a grave.  
As some bold plunderers for buried wealth,  
We ransack tombs for pastime; from the dust  
Call up the sleeping hero; bid him tread  
The scene for our amusement. How like gods  
We sit, and, wrapt in immortality,  
Shed generous tears on wretches born to die;  
Their fate deploring, to forget our own.

What all the pomps and triumphs of our lives  
But legacies in blossom? Our lean soil  
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities,  
From friends interr’d beneath, a rich manure!  
Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;  
Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know  
Our present frailties or approaching fate?

Lorenzo! such the glories of the world!  
What is the world itself? thy world—a grave.  
Where is the dust that has not been alive?  
The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors;  
From human mould we reap our daily bread.  
The globe around earth’s hollow surface shakes,  
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.  
O’er devastation we blind revels keep;  
Whole buried towns support the dancer’s heel.  
The moist of human frame the sun exhales;  
Winds scatter through the mighty void the dry;  
Earth repossesses part of what she gave,  
And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire;

Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils;  
As Nature wide our ruins spread. Man's death  
Inhabits all things but the thought of man.

Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires,  
His tomb is mortal; empires die: where, now,  
The Roman? Greek? they stalk, an empty name!  
Yet few regard them in this useful light,  
Though half our learning is their epitaph.  
When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,  
That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,  
O Death! I stretch my views, what visions rise!  
What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!  
In wither'd laurels glide before my sight!  
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd high  
With human agitation, roll along  
In unsubstantial images of air!  
The melancholy ghosts of dead Renown,  
Whispering faint echoes of the world's applause,  
With penitential aspect, as they pass,  
All point at earth, and hiss at human pride;  
The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

But, O Lorenzo! far the rest above,  
Of ghastly Nature, and enormous size,  
One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,  
And shakes my frame. Of one departed World  
I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath  
And dismal sea-weed crown her\*! o'er her urn  
Reclin'd, she weeps her desolated realms,  
And bloated sons, and, weeping, prophecies  
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames:

\* The Deluge, referred to Genesis vii. 22.

But, like Cassandra, prophecies in vain;  
In vain to many; not, I trust, to thee.

For, know'st thou not, or art thou loth to know,  
The great decree, the counsel of the Skies?  
Deluge and Conflagration, dreadful powers!  
Prime ministers of vengeance! chain'd in caves  
Distinct, apart, the giant furies roar;  
Apart, or such their horrid rage for ruin,  
In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage  
Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.  
But not for this ordain'd their boundless rage:  
When Heaven's inferior instruments of wrath,  
War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak  
To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,  
These are let loose alternate: down they rush,  
Swift and tempestuous, from the' eternal throne,  
With irresistible commission arm'd,  
The world, in vain corrected, to destroy,  
And ease creation of the shocking scene.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?  
The fate of Nature, as for man her birth.  
Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,  
And make creation groan with human guilt.  
How must it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,  
But not of waters! At the destin'd hour,  
By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,  
See all the formidable sons of fire,  
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play  
Their various engines; all at once disgorge  
Their blazing magazines, and take, by storm,  
This poor terrestrial citadel of man.

Amazing period! when each mountain-height



Out-burns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour  
Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd;  
Stars rush, and final Ruin fiercely drives  
Her plough-share o'er creation!—while aloft,  
More than astonishment! if more can be!  
Far other firmament than e'er was seen,  
Than e'er was thought by man! far other stars!  
Stars animate, that govern these of fire;  
Far other sun!—a sun, O how unlike  
The Babe at Bethle'm! how unlike the man  
That groan'd on Calvary!—yet he it is;  
That Man of sorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp!  
In grandeur terrible all Heaven descends!  
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.  
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,  
As blots and clouds that darken and disgrace  
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.  
And now, all dross remov'd, Heaven's own pure day,  
Full on the confines of our ether flames.  
While (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!  
Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas  
And storms sulphureous, her voracious jaws  
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.  
Lorenzo! welcome to this scene; the last  
In Nature's course, the first in Wisdom's thought.  
This strikes, if aught can strike thee; this awakes  
The most supine; this snatches man from death.  
Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo! then, and follow me,  
Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,  
Loud calls my soul, and ardour wings her flight.  
I find my inspiration in my theme;  
The grandeur of my subject is my Muse.

At midnight, when mankind is wrapt in peace,  
And worldly Fancy feeds on golden dreams,  
To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour;  
At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst  
From tenfold darkness, sudden as the spark  
From smitten steel; from nitrous grain the blaze.  
Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more!  
The day is broke, which never more shall close!  
Above, around, beneath, amazement all!  
Terror and glory join'd in their extremes!  
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!  
All Nature struggling in the pangs of death!  
Dost thou not hear her? dost thou not deplore  
Her strong convulsions, and her final groan?  
Where are we now? Ah me! the ground is gone  
On which we stood. Lorenzo! while thou may'st  
Provide more firm support, or sink for ever!  
Where? how? from whence? Vain hope! it is too  
late!

Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly,  
When consternation turns the good man pale?

Great day! for which all other days were made;  
For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth,  
And an eternity, the date of gods,  
Descended on poor earth-created man!  
Great day of dread, decision, and despair!  
At thought of thee each sublunary wish  
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world,  
And catches at each reed of hope in Heaven.  
At thought of thee!—and art thou absent then?  
Lorenzo! no; 'tis here; it is begun;—  
Already is begun the grand assize,

In thee, in all: deputed Conscience scales  
The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom;  
Forestalls, and, by forestalling, proves it sure.  
Why on himself should man void judgment pass?  
Is idle Nature laughing at her sons?  
Who Conscience sent her sentence will support,  
And God above assert that God in man.

Thrice happy they! that enter now the court  
Heaven opens in their bosom: but how rare,  
Ah me! that magnanimity, how rare!  
What hero like the man who stands himself,  
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone,  
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings,  
Resolv'd to silence future murmurs there?  
The coward flies, and, flying, is undone.  
(Art thou a coward?) no: the coward flies;  
Thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, but fears to know;  
Asks, 'what is truth?' With Pilate\*, and retires;  
Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng;  
Asylum sad! from reason, hope, and Heaven!

Shall all but man look out with ardent eye  
For that great day which was ordain'd for man?  
O day of consummation! mark supreme  
(If men are wise) of human thought! nor least  
Or in the sight of angels or their King!  
Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,  
Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er blaze,  
As in a theatre, surround this scene,  
Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.  
Angels look out for thee; for thee their Lord,

\* John xviii. 38.

To vindicate his glory; and for thee  
Creation universal calls aloud  
To disinvolve the moral world, and give  
To Nature's renovation brighter charms.

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,  
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?  
I think of nothing else; I see! I feel it!  
All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round!  
All deities, like summer's swarms, on wing!  
All basking in the full meridian blaze!  
I see the Judge enthron'd! the flaming guard!  
The volume open'd! open'd every heart!  
A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought!  
No patron! intercessor none! now past  
The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!  
For guilt no plea! to pain, no pause! no bound!  
Inexorable all! and all extreme!

Nor man alone; the foe of God and man,  
From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,  
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd;  
Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.  
All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace.  
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll  
His baleful eyes! he curses whom he dreads,  
And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'Tis present to my thought!—and yet where is it?  
Angels can't tell me; angels cannot guess  
The period, from created beings lock'd  
In darkness; but the process and the place  
Are less obscure; for these may man inquire.  
Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears!  
Great key of hearts! great finisher of fates!

Great end! and great beginning! say, where art  
thou?

Art thou in time, or in eternity?

Nor in eternity nor time I find thee:

These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,  
(Monarchs of all elaps'd or unarriv'd!)

As in debate, how best their powers allied

May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath  
Of him, whom both their monarchies obey.

Time, this vast fabric for him built (and doom'd  
With him to fall) now bursting o'er his head,  
His lamp, the sun, extinguish'd, from beneath  
The frown of hideous darkness calls his sons  
From their long slumber, from earth's heaving  
womb

To second birth! contemporary throng!

Rous'd at one call, upstarting from one bed,

Press'd in one crowd, appall'd with one amaze,

He turns them o'er, Eternity! to thee.

Then (as a king depos'd disdains to live)

He falls on his own scythe, nor falls alone;

His greatest foe falls with him; Time, and he

Who murder'd all Time's offspring, Death, expire.

Time was! Eternity now reigns alone!

Awful Eternity! offended queen!

And her resentment to mankind how just!

With kind intent, soliciting access,

How often has she knock'd at human hearts!

Rich to repay their hospitality,

How often call'd! and with the voice of God!

Yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat!

A dream! while foulest foes found welcome there!

A dream, a cheat, now all things but her smile.

For, lo! her twice ten thousand gates thrown  
wide,

As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,  
With banners streaming as the comet's blaze,  
And clarions louder than the deep in storms,  
Sonorous as immortal breath can blow,  
Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,  
Of light, of darkness, in a middle field,  
Wide as creation! populous as wide!  
A neutral region! there to mark the' event  
Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes  
Detain'd them close spectators, through a length  
Of ages, ripening to this grand result;  
Ages as yet unnumber'd but by God,  
Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates  
The rights of virtue, and his own renown.

Eternity, the various sentence past,  
Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,  
Sulphureous or ambrosial. What ensues?  
The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!  
Which makes a hell of hell, a Heaven of Heaven.  
The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns  
Her adamant key's enormous size  
Through Destiny's inextricable wards,  
Deep driving every bolt on both their fates;  
Then from the crystal battlements of Heaven,  
Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,  
Ten thousand thousand fathom, there to rust,  
And ne'er unlock her resolution more.  
The deep resounds, and hell, through all her glooms,  
Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.

O how unlike the chorus of the skies!  
O how unlike those shouts of joy that shake  
The whole ethereal! how the concave rings!  
Nor strange! when deities their voice exalt;  
And louder far than when Creation rose,  
To see Creation's godlike aim and end  
So well accomplish'd! so divinely clos'd!  
To see the mighty Dramatist's last act  
(As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest.  
No fancied God; a God, indeed, descends,  
To solve all knots; to strike the moral home;  
To throw full day on darkest scenes of time;  
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.  
Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,  
The charm'd spectators thunder their applause,  
And the vast void beyond applause resounds.

What then am I?—

Amidst applauding worlds,  
And worlds celestial, is there found on earth  
A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string,  
Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?  
Censure on thee, Lorenzo! I suspend,  
And turn it on myself; how greatly due!  
All, all is right, by God ordain'd or done;  
And who, but God, resum'd the friends he gave?  
And have I been complaining, then, so long?  
Complaining of his favours, pain, and death?  
Who, without Pain's advice would e'er be good?  
Who, without Death but would be good in vain?  
Pain is to save from pain; all punishment  
To make for peace; and death to save from death;  
And second death, to guard immortal life;

To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,  
And turn the tide of souls another way;  
By the same tenderness divine ordain'd  
That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man  
A fairer Eden, endless, in the skies.

Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene,  
Resumes them to prepare us for the next.  
All evils natural are moral goods;  
All discipline indulgence, on the whole.  
None are unhappy; all have cause to smile,  
But such as to themselves that cause deny.  
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains;  
Error, in act, or judgment, is the source  
Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake,  
And Nature tax, when false opinion stings.  
Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd,  
But chiefly then when Grief puts in her claim.  
Joy from the joyous frequently betrays,  
Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.  
Joy amidst ills corroborates, exalts;  
'Tis joy and conquest; joy and virtue too.  
A noble fortitude in ills delights  
Heaven, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace.  
Affliction is the good man's shining scene;  
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray.  
As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.  
Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,  
And virtue in calamities, admire.  
The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;  
An ever-green that stands the northern blast,  
And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'Tis a prime part of happiness to know



How much unhappiness must prove our lot;  
A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,  
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,  
Nor think it misery to be a man;  
Who thinks it is shall never be a god.  
Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.

What spoke proud Passion!—'Wish my being  
lost\*?'

Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!  
The triumph of my soul is,—that I am;  
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!  
Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still;  
Unfathomably deep our treasure runs,  
In golden veins, through all eternity!  
Ages, and ages, and succeeding still  
New ages, where this phantom of an hour,  
Which courts, each night, dull slumber for repair,  
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,  
And fly through infinite, and all unlock,  
And (if deserv'd) by Heaven's redundant love,  
Made half-adorable, itself adore,  
And find, in adoration, endless joy!  
Where thou, not master of a moment here,  
Frail as the flower and fleeting as the gale,  
May'st boast a whole eternity, enrich'd  
With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.  
Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninspir'd,  
Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,  
How kind is God, how great (if good) is man.  
No man too largely from Heaven's love can hope,

\* Referring to the First Night.

If what is hop'd he labours to secure.

Ills!—there are none: All-gracious! none from thee;

From man full many! Numerous is the race  
Of blackest ill, and those immortal too,  
Begot by Madness on fair Liberty,  
Heaven's daughter, hell-debauch'd! her hand alone  
Unlocks destruction to the sons of men,  
Fast barr'd by thine; high-wall'd with adamant,  
Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,  
And cover'd with the thunders of thy law,  
Whose threats are mercies, whose injunctions  
guides,

Assisting, not restraining, Reason's choice;  
Whose sanctions, unavoidable results  
From Nature's course, indulgently reveal'd,  
If unreveal'd more dangerous, nor less sure.  
Thus an indulgent father warns his sons,  
'Do this, fly that;'—nor always tells the cause;  
Pleas'd to reward, as duty to his will,  
A conduct needful to their own repose.

Great God of wonders! (if, thy love survey'd,  
Aught else the name of wonderful retains)  
What rocks are these on which to build our  
trust?

Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find,  
Or this alone—'That none is to be found:'  
Not one to soften Censure's hardy crime;  
Not one to palliate peevish Grief's complaint,  
Who, like a demon murmuring from the dust,  
Dares into judgment call her judge.—Supreme!  
For all I bless thee; most for the severe;

Her death\*—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,  
That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!  
It thunders;—but it thunders to preserve;  
It strengthens what it strikes; its wholesome dread  
Averts the dreaded pain: its hideous groans  
Join Heaven's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,  
Great Source of good alone! how kind in all!  
In vengeance kind! pain, death, gehenna, save.

Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind!  
Not that alone which solaces and shines,  
The rough and gloomy, challenges our praise.  
The winter is as needful as the spring;  
The thunder as the sun. A stagnate mass  
Of vapours breeds a pestilential air:  
Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze  
To Nature's health, than purifying storms.  
The dread volcano ministers to good;  
Its smother'd flames might undermine the world.  
Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man;  
Comets good omens are, when duly scann'd;  
And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.

Man is responsible for ills receiv'd;  
Those we call wretched are a chosen band,  
Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.  
Amid my list of blessings infinite  
Stand this the foremost, 'That my heart has bled.'  
'Tis Heaven's last effort of good-will to man.  
When pain can't bless, Heaven quits us in despair.  
Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,  
Or grieves too much, deserves not to be bless'd,

\* Lucia.

Inhuman or effeminate, his heart.  
Reason absolves the grief which reason ends.  
May Heaven ne'er trust my friend with happiness,  
Till it has taught him how to bear it well  
By previous pain, and made it safe to smile!  
Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain,  
Nor hazard their extinction from excess.  
My change of heart a change of style demands;  
The Consolation cancels the Complaint,  
And makes a convert of my guilty song.

As when o'erlabour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,  
A panting traveller some rising ground,  
Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round,  
And measures with his eye the various vale,  
The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has past,  
And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home,  
Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil.  
Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent  
The Muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod,  
Various, extensive, beaten but by few;  
And, conscious of her prudence in repose,  
Pause, and with pleasure meditate an end,  
Though still remote; so fruitful is my theme.  
Through many a field of moral and divine  
The Muse has stray'd, and much of sorrow seen  
In human ways, and much of false and vain,  
Which none who travel this bad road can miss.  
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily she wept;  
Of love divine the wonders she display'd;  
Prov'd man immortal; show'd the source of joy;  
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds  
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,

The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch,  
Though not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,  
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,  
In this our land of travel and of hope.  
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

What then remains? much! much! a mighty debt  
To be discharg'd. These thoughts, O Night! are  
thine;

From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,  
While others slept. So Cynthia (poets feign)  
In shadows veil'd soft-sliding from her sphere,  
Her shepherd cheer'd, of her enamour'd less  
Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,  
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?  
Immortal Silence! where shall I begin?  
Where end? or how steal music from the spheres  
To sooth their goddess?

O majestic Night!

Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder-born!  
And fated to survive the transient sun!  
By mortals and immortals seen with awe!  
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,  
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in Heaven's loom  
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,  
In ample folds of drapery divine,  
Thy flowing mantle form, and, Heaven throughout,  
Voluminously pour thy pompous train:  
Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,  
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse,  
And, like a sable curtain starr'd with gold,  
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.  
And what, O man! so worthy to be sung?

What more prepares us for the songs of Heaven?  
Creation of archangels is the theme!  
What to be sung so needful, what so well  
Celestial joys prepares us to sustain?  
The soul of man, His face design'd to see  
Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,  
Has here a previous scene of objects great  
On which to dwell, to stretch to that expanse  
Of thought, to rise to that exalted height  
Of admiration, to contract that awe,  
And give her whole capacities that strength  
Which best may qualify for final joy.  
The more our spirits are enlarg'd on earth,  
The deeper draught shall they receive of Heaven.  
    Heaven's King! whose face unveil'd consum-  
        mates bliss,  
Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void  
The whole creation leaves in human hearts!  
Thou! who didst touch the lips of Jesse's son\*,  
Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,  
And set his harp in concert with the spheres,  
While of thy works material the Supreme  
I dare attempt, assist my daring song:  
Loose me from earth's inclosure; from the sun's  
Contracted circle set my heart at large;  
Eliminate my spirit, give it range  
Through provinces of thought yet unexplor'd;  
Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,  
Creation's golden steps, to climb to thee:  
Teach me with art great Nature to control,

\* David, 1 Samuel xvi. 18—24.

And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night.  
Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the sun  
Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?

Lorenzo! come, and warm thee; thou whose heart,  
Whose little heart, is moor'd within a nook  
Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh;  
Another ocean calls, a nobler port;  
I am thy pilot, I thy prosperous gale:  
Gainful thy voyage through yon azure main,  
Main without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore,  
And whence thou may'st import eternal wealth,  
And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.  
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?  
Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin;  
Thy tour through Nature's universal orb.  
Nature delineates her whole chart at large  
On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres;  
And man how purblind, if unknown the whole  
Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,  
Shall own he never was from home before;  
Come, my Prometheus\*! from thy pointed rock  
Of false ambition, if unchain'd, we'll mount;  
We'll, innocently, steal celestial fire,  
And kindle our devotion at the stars;  
A theft that shall not chain, but set thee free.

Above our atmosphere's intestine wars,  
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;  
Above the northern nests of feather'd snows,  
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge  
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves

\* Night the Eighth.

Where infant tempests wait their growing wings,  
And tune their tender voices to that roar  
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world;  
Above misconstrued omens of the sky,  
Far-travell'd comets' calculated blaze,  
E lance thy thought, and think of more than man:  
Thy soul, till now contracted, wither'd, shrunk,  
Blighted by blasts of earth's unwholesome air,  
Will blossom here; spread all her faculties  
To these bright ardours; every pow'r unfold,  
And rise into sublimities of thought.

Stars teach, as well as shine. At Nature's birth  
Thus their commission ran.—'Be kind to man.'  
Where art thou, poor benighted traveller!  
The stars will light thee, though the moon should fail.  
Where art thou, more benighted! more astray!  
In ways immoral? the stars call thee back,  
And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.

This prospect vast, what is it?—Weigh'd aright  
'Tis Nature's system of divinity,  
And every student of the night inspires.  
'Tis elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand;  
Scripture authentic! uncorrupt by man.  
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift  
Of thought nocturnal!) I'll point out to thee  
Its various lessons; some that may surprise  
An unadept in mysteries of Night;  
Little, perhaps, expected in her school,  
Nor thought to grow on planet or on star,  
Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign,  
Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here  
Exists, indeed,—a lecture to mankind.



What read we here?—the' existence of a God?  
—Yes; and of other beings man above;  
Natives of ether! sons of higher climes!  
And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,  
Eternity is written in the skies.  
And whose eternity?—Lorenzo! thine;  
Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,  
Virtue grows here; here springs the sovereign cure  
Of almost every vice, but chiefly thine,  
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo! thou canst wake at midnight too,  
Though not on morals bent. Ambition, Pleasure!  
Those tyrants I for thee so lately fought\*,  
Afford their harass'd slaves but slender rest.  
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,  
And the sun's noon-tide blaze prime dawn of day,  
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,  
Commencing one of our antipodes!  
In thy nocturnal rove one moment halt,  
'Twixt stage and stage of riot and cabal,  
And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,  
If bold to meet the face of injur'd Heaven)  
To yonder stars: for other ends they shine  
Than to light revellers from shame to shame,  
And thus be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon arch, that infinite of space,  
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,  
Which set the living firmament on fire  
At the first glance, in such an overwhelm  
Of wonderful, on man's astonish'd sight,

\* Night the Eighth.

Rushes Omnipotence?—To curb our pride,  
Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Power  
Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;  
To draw up man's ambition to himself,  
And bind our chaste affections to his throne.  
Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,  
And welcom'd on Heaven's coast with most applause,

An humble, pure, and heavenly-minded heart,  
Are here inspir'd;—and canst thou gaze too long?

Nor stands thy wrath depriv'd of its reproof,  
Or unupbraided by this radiant choir.

The planets of each system represent  
Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;  
Sweet interchange of rays, receiv'd, return'd;  
Enlight'ning and enlighten'd! all, at once,  
Attracting and attracted! patriot-like,  
None sins against the welfare of the whole;  
But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,  
Affords an emblem of millennial love.

Nothing in Nature, much less conscious being,  
Was e'er created solely for itself.

Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this  
Material picture of benevolence.

And know, of all our supercilious race,  
Thou most inflammable! thou wasp of men!  
Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found  
As rightly set as are the starry spheres:  
'Tis Nature's structure, broke by stubborn will,  
Breeds all that uncelestial discord there.  
Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave?  
Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,

And seize thy brother's throat?—For what?—a  
clod?

An inch of earth? The planets cry, 'Forbear.'  
They chase our double darkness, Nature's gloom,  
And (kinder still!) our intellectual night.

And see, Day's amiable sister sends  
Her invitation in the softest rays  
Of mitigated lustre; courts thy sight,  
Which suffers from her tyrant-brother's blaze.  
Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,  
Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;  
With gain and joy she bribes thee to be wise.  
Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe  
Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,  
And deep reception in the intender'd heart;  
While light peeps through the darkness like a spy,  
And darkness shows its grandeur by the light.  
Nor is the profit greater than the joy,  
If human hearts at glorious objects glow,  
And admiration can inspire delight.

What speak I more than I this moment feel?  
With pleasing stupor first the soul it struck  
(Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise!)  
Then into transport starting from her trance,  
With love and admiration how she glows!  
This gorgeous apparatus! this display!  
This ostentation of creative power!  
This theatre!—what eye can take it in?  
By what divine enchantment was it rais'd,  
For minds of the first magnitude to launch  
In endless speculation, and adore?  
One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine,

And light us deep into the Deity;  
How boundless in magnificence and might!  
O what a confluence of ethereal fires,  
From urns unnumber'd, down the steep of Heaven,  
Streams to a point, and centers in my sight!  
Nor tarries there; I feel it at my heart:  
My heart, at once, it humbles and exalts;  
Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.  
Who sees it unexalted, or unaw'd?  
Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen?  
Material offspring of Omnipotence!  
Inanimate, all-animating birth!  
Work worthy Him who made it! worthy praise!  
All praise! praise more than human! nor deny'd  
Thy praise divine!—But though man, drown'd in  
    sleep,  
Withholds his homage, not alone I wake;  
Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing unheard  
By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,  
In this his universal temple hung  
With lustres, with innumerable lights,  
That shed religion on the soul; at once  
The temple and the preacher! O how loud  
It calls devotion! genuine growth of Night!  
    Devotion! daughter of Astronomy!  
An undevout astronomer is mad.  
True; all things speak a God; but in the small  
Men trace out him; in great he seizes man;  
Seizes, and elevates, and wraps, and fills  
With new inquiries, 'mid associates new.  
Tell me, ye Stars! ye Planets! tell me, all  
Ye starr'd and planeted Inhabitants! what is it?

What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud Arch,  
(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)  
Built with divine ambition! in disdain  
Of limit built! built in the taste of Heaven!  
Vast concave! ample dome! wast thou design'd  
A meet apartment for the Deity?—  
Not so; that thought alone thy state impairs,  
Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,  
And streightens thy diffusive; dwarfs the whole,  
And makes an universe an orrery.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,  
Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restor'd,  
O Nature! wide flies off the' expanding round:  
As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,  
The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow,  
The vast displosion dissipates the clouds,  
Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies;  
Thus (but far more) the' expanding round flies off,  
And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,  
Might teem with new creation; reinflam'd,  
Thy luminaries triumph, and assume  
Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange  
Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,  
Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,  
From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense:  
For sure to sense they truly are divine,  
And half absolv'd idolatry from guilt;  
Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was  
In those who put forth all they had of man  
Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher,  
But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd, and thought  
What was their highest, must be their ador'd.

But they how weak, who could no higher mount!  
And are there, then, Lorenzo! those to whom  
Unseen, and unexistent, are the same?  
And if incomprehensible is join'd,  
Who dare pronounce it madness to believe?  
Why has the mighty Builder thrown aside  
All measure in his work? stretch'd out his line  
So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole?  
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)  
Deep in the bosom of his universe  
Dropp'd down that reasoning mite, that insect, man,  
To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene?—  
That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement  
For disbelief of wonders in himself.  
Shall God be less miraculous than what  
His hand has form'd? shall mysteries descend  
From unmysterious? things more elevate  
Be more familiar? uncreated lie  
More obvious than created to the grasp  
Of human thought? The more of wonderful  
Is heard in him, the more we should assent.  
Could we conceive him, God he could not be;  
Or he not God, or we could not be men.  
A God alone can comprehend a God:  
Man's distance how immense! On such a theme,  
Know this, Lorenzo! (seem it ne'er so strange)  
Nothing can satisfy but what confounds;  
Nothing but what astonishes is true.  
The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing,  
And every star sheds light upon thy creed.  
These stars, this furniture, this cost of Heaven,  
If but reported, thou hadst ne'er believ'd;

But thine eye tells thee the romance is true.  
The grand of Nature is the' Almighty's oath  
In Reason's court, to silence Unbelief.

How my mind, op'ning at this scene, imbibes  
The moral emanations of the skies,  
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires!  
Has the Great Sovereign sent ten thousand worlds  
To tell us he resides above them all,  
In glory's unapproachable recess?  
And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny  
The sumptuous, the magnific embassy  
A moment's audience? Turn we, nor will hear  
From whom they come, or what they would impart  
For man's emolument, sole cause that stoops  
Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouse;  
Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,  
And glance from east to west, from pole to pole.  
Who sees but is confounded, or convinc'd?  
Renounces reason, or a God adores?  
Mankind was sent into the world to see:  
Sight gives the science needful to their peace;  
That obvious science asks small learning's aid.  
Would'st thou on metaphysic pinions soar?  
Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns?  
Or travel history's enormous round?  
Nature no such hard task enjoins: she gave  
A make to man directive of his thought;  
A make set upright, pointing to the stars,  
As who should say, 'Read thy chief lesson there.'  
Too late to read this manuscript of Heaven,  
When, like a parchment-scroll, shrunk up by flames,  
It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight.

Lesson how various! not the God alone,  
I see his ministers; I see, diffus'd  
In radiant orders, essences sublime,  
Of various offices, of various plume,  
In heavenly liveries distinctly clad,  
Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,  
Or all commix'd; they stand, with wings outspread,  
Listening to catch the Master's least command,  
And fly through Nature ere the moment ends;  
Numbers innumerable!—Well conceiv'd  
By Pagan and by Christian! O'er each sphere  
Presides an angel to direct its course,  
And feed, or fan, its flames; or to discharge  
Other high trusts unknown. For who can see  
Such pomp of matter, and imagine mind,  
For which alone inanimate was made,  
More sparingly dispens'd? that nobler son,  
Far liker the great Sire!—'Tis thus the skies  
Inform us of superiors numberless,  
As much, in excellence, above mankind,  
As above earth, in magnitude, the spheres.  
These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us.  
In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds.  
Perhaps a thousand demigods descend  
On every beam we see to walk with men.  
Awful reflection! strong restraint from ill!

Yet here our virtue finds still stronger aid  
From these ethereal glories sense surveys.  
Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault:  
With just attention is it view'd? we feel  
A sudden succour, unimplor'd, unthought.  
Nature herself does half the work of man.



Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,  
The promontory's height, the depth profound  
Of subterranean, excavated grotts,  
Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide,  
From Nature's structure or the scoop of Time;  
If ample of dimension, vast of size,  
Ev'n these an aggrandizing impulse give;  
Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights  
Ev'n these infuse.—But what of vast in these?  
Nothing—or we must own the skies forgot.  
Much less in art.—Vain Art! thou pigmy power!  
How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,  
To show thy littleness! What childish toys,  
Thy watery columns squirted to the clouds!  
Thy bason'd rivers and imprison'd seas!  
Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!  
Thy hundred-gated capitals! or those  
Where three days' travel left us much to ride;  
Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,  
Arches triumphal, theatres immense,  
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air!  
Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!  
Yet these affect us in no common kind:  
What then the force of such superior scenes?  
Enter a temple, it will strike an awe:  
What awe from this the Deity has built?  
A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives:  
The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise.  
In a bright mirror his own hands have made,  
Here we see something like the face of God.  
Seems it not then enough to say, Lorenzo!  
'To man abandon'd, 'Hast thou seen the skies?'

And yet so thwarted Nature's kind design  
By daring man, he makes her sacred awe  
(That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation  
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts  
Celestial Art's intent. The trembling stars  
See crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom  
With front erect, that hide their head by day,  
And making night still darker by their deeds.  
Slumbering in covert, till the shades descend,  
Rapine and Murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.  
The miser earths his treasure, and the thief,  
Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.  
Now plots and foul Conspiracies awake,  
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,  
Havock and devastation they prepare,  
And kingdoms tottering in the field of blood.  
Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.  
What shall I do?—suppress it? or proclaim?—  
Why sleeps the thunder? Now, Lorenzo! now  
His best friend's couch the rank adulterer  
Ascends secure, and laughs at gods and men.  
Preposterous madmen, void of fear or shame,  
Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of  
    Heaven,  
Yet shrink and shudder at a mortal's sight.  
Were moon and stars for villains only made  
To guide, yet screen them, with tenebrious light?  
No; they were made to fashion the sublime  
Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.

Those ends were answer'd once, when mortals  
    liv'd  
Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent,

In theory sublime. O how unlike  
Those vermin of the night, this moment sung,  
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!  
Those ancient sages, human stars! they met  
Their brothers of the skies at midnight hour,  
Their counsel ask'd, and what they ask'd obey'd.  
The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank  
The poison'd bowl, and he of Tusculum,  
With him of Corduba (immortal names!)  
In these unbounded and Elysian walks,  
An area fit for gods and godlike men,  
They took their nightly round, through radiant  
paths,

By seraphs trod; instructed, chiefly, thus,  
To tread in their bright footsteps here below,  
To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.  
There they contracted their contempt of earth;  
Of hopes eternal kindled there the fire;  
There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew  
(Great visitants!) more intimate with God,  
More worth to men, more joyous to themselves.  
Through various virtues they, with ardour, ran  
The zodiac of their learn'd illustrious lives.

In Christian hearts, O for a Pagan zeal!  
A needful, but opprobrious pray'r! as much  
Our ardour less, as greater is our light.  
How monstrous this in morals! Scarce more strange  
Would this phenomenon in Nature strike,  
A sun that froze her, or a star that warm'd.

What taught these heroes of the moral world?  
To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.  
These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee,

And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught,  
That narrow views betray to misery;  
That wise it is to comprehend the whole;  
That virtue rose from Nature, ponder'd well,  
The single base of virtue built to Heaven;  
That God and Nature our attention claim;  
That Nature is the glass reflecting God,  
As by the sea reflected is the sun,  
Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his sphere;  
That mind immortal loves immortal aims;  
That boundless mind affects a boundless space;  
That vast surveys, and the sublime of things,  
The soul assimilate, and make her great;  
That, therefore, Heaven her glories, as a fund  
Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.  
Such are their doctrines; such the Night inspir'd.

And what more true? what truth of greater  
weight?

The soul of man was made to walk the skies,  
Delightful outlet of her prison here!  
There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties  
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;  
There freely can respire, dilate, extend,  
In full proportion let loose all her powers,  
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.  
Nor as a stranger does she wander there,  
But, wonderful herself, through wonder strays;  
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;  
Dives deep in their economy divine,  
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,  
And, like a master, judges not amiss.  
Hence greatly pleas'd, and justly proud, the soul

Grows conscious of her birth celestial; breathes  
More life, more vigour, in her native air,  
And feels herself at home among the stars,  
And, feeling, emulates her country's praise.

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo?—  
As earth the body, since the skies sustain  
The soul with food that gives immortal life,  
Call it the noble pasture of the mind,  
Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,  
And riots through the luxuries of thought.  
Call it the garden of the Deity,  
Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth  
Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.  
Call it the breast-plate of the true High-priest,  
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,  
In points of highest moment, right response;  
And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus have we found a true astrology;  
Thus have we found a new and noble sense,  
In which alone stars govern human fates.  
O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall  
Bloodshed, and havock, on embattled realms,  
And rescued monarchs from so black a guilt!  
Bourbon! this wish how generous in a foe!  
Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,  
And stick thy deathless name among the stars,  
For mighty conquests on a needle's point?  
Instead of forging chains for foreigners,  
Bastile thy tutor; grandeur all thy aim?  
As yet thou know'st not what it is. How great,  
How glorious, then appears the mind of man,  
When in it all the stars and planets roll!

And what it seems it is. Great objects make  
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;  
Those still more godlike as these more divine.

And more divine than these thou canst not see.  
Dazzled, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught  
Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel  
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!  
An Eden this! a Paradise unlost!

I meet the Deity in every view,  
And tremble at my nakedness before him!  
O that I could but reach the tree of life!  
For here it grows unguarded from our taste;  
No flaming sword denies our entrance here:  
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.

Lorenzo! much of moral hast thou seen:  
Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark  
The mathematic glories of the skies,  
In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.  
Lorenzo's boasted builders, Chance, and Fate,  
Are left to finish his aërial towers;  
Wisdom and Choice their well-known characters  
Here deep impress, and claim it for their own.  
Though splendid all, no splendour void of use,  
Use rivals beauty, art contends with power;  
No wanton waste amid effuse expense,  
The great Economist adjusting all  
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise.  
How rich the prospect! and for ever new;  
And newest to the man that views it most;  
For newer still in infinite succeeds.  
Then these aërial racers, O how swift!  
How the shaft loiters from the strongest string;

Spirit alone can distance the career,  
Orb above orb ascending without end!  
Circle in circle, without end, inclos'd!  
Wheel within wheel; Ezekiel, like to thine\*!  
Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream;  
Though seen, we labour to believe it true!  
What involution! what extent! what swarms  
Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immensely great!  
Immensely distant from each other's spheres!  
What, then, the wondrous space through which  
they roll?

At once it quite ingulfs all human thought;  
'Tis Comprehension's absolute defeat.

Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here:  
Through this illustrious chaos to the sight,  
Arrangement neat and chastest order reign.  
The path prescrib'd, inviolably kept,  
Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind.  
Worlds ever thwarting never interfere:  
What knots are tied! how soon are they dissolv'd,  
And set the seeming married planets free!  
They rove for ever, without error rove;  
Confusion unconfus'd! nor less admire  
This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!  
In motion all! yet what profound repose;  
What fervid action, yet no noise! as aw'd  
To silence by the presence of their Lord;  
Or hush'd, by his command, in love to man,  
And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,  
Restless themselves. On you cerulean plain,

\* Ezekiel x. 9, 10.

In exultation to their God and thine,  
They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,  
Eternal celebration of his praise.

But since their song arrives not at our ear,  
Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the sight  
Fair hieroglyphic of his peerless power.  
Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,  
The circles intricate, and mystic maze,  
Wave the grand cipher of Omnipotence;  
To gods how great! how legible to man!

Leaves so much wonder greater wonder still?  
Where are the pillars that support the skies?  
What more than Atlantean shoulder props  
The' incumbent load? what magic, what strange art,  
In fluid air these pond'rous orbs sustains!  
Who would not think them hung in golden chains?  
And so they are; in the high will of Heaven,  
Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,  
Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,  
Or nought of all; if such the dread decree.

Imagine from their deep foundations torn  
The most gigantic sons of earth, the broad  
And towering Alps, all toss'd into the sea;  
And, light as down, or volatile as air,  
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,  
In time and measure exquisite; while all  
The winds, in emulation of the spheres,  
Tune their sonorous instruments aloft,  
The concert swell, and animate the ball.  
Would this appear amazing? what then worlds  
In a far thinner element sustain'd,  
And acting the same part, with greater skill,



More rapid movement, and for noblest ends?

More obvious ends to pass, are not these stars  
The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,  
On which angelic delegates of Heaven,  
At certain periods, as the Sovereign nods,  
Discharge high trusts of vengeance or of love,  
To clothe, in outward grandeur, grand design,  
And acts most solemn still more solemnize?  
Ye Citizens of air! what ardent thanks,  
What full effusion of the grateful heart,  
Is due from man, indulg'd in such a sight!  
A sight so noble! and a sight so kind!  
It drops new truths at every new survey!  
Feels not Lorenzo something stir within,  
That sweeps away all period? As these spheres  
Measure duration, they no less inspire  
The godlike hope of ages without end.  
The boundless space, through which these rovers  
take

Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought  
Of boundless time. Thus by kind Nature's skill,  
To man unlabour'd, that important guest,  
Eternity, finds entrance at the sight;  
And an eternity for man ordain'd,  
Or these his destin'd midnight counsellors,  
The stars, had never whisper'd it to man.  
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons.  
Could she, then, kindle the most ardent wish  
To disappoint it?—That is blasphemy.  
Thus of thy creed a second article,  
Momentous as the' existence of a God,  
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought,

And thou may'st read thy soul immortal here.

Here, then, Lorenzo! on these glories dwell,  
Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof,  
That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.  
Assemblies?—this is one divinely bright;  
Here, unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,  
Range through the fairest, and the Sultan\* scorn.  
He, wise as thou, no Crescent holds so fair  
As that which on his turban awes a world,  
And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.  
Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,  
A mind superior to the charms of power.  
Thou muffled in delusions of this life!  
Can yonder moon turn Ocean in his bed,  
From side to side, in constant ebb and flow,  
And purify from stench his wat'ry realms?  
And fails her moral influence? wants she power  
To turn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought  
From stagnating on earth's infected shore,  
And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart?  
Fails her attraction when it draws to Heaven?  
Nay, and to what thou valu'st more, earth's joy?  
Minds elevate, and panting for unseen,  
And defecate from sense, alone obtain  
Full relish of existence undeflower'd,  
The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss;  
All else on earth amounts—to what? to this,  
'Bad to be suffer'd, blessings to be left:'  
Earth's richest inventory boasts no more.  
Of higher scenes be then the call obey'd.

\* The Emperor of Turkey.

O let me gaze!—of gazing there's no end.  
O let me think!—thought, too, is wilder'd here;  
In mid-way flight Imagination tires;  
Yet soon reprunes her wings to soar anew,  
Her point unable to forbear or gain;  
So great the pleasure, so profound the plan!  
A banquet this where men and angels meet,  
Eat the same manna, mingle earth and Heaven.  
How distant some of these nocturnal suns!  
So distant (says the sage) 'twere not absurd  
To doubt if beams, set out at Nature's birth,  
Are yet arriv'd at this so foreign world,  
Though nothing half so rapid as their flight.  
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,  
And roll for ever. Who can satiate sight  
In such a scene? in such an ocean wide  
Of deep astonishment? where depth, height,  
breadth,  
Are lost in their extremes; and where to count  
The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,  
Perhaps a seraph's computation fails.  
Now go, Ambition! boast thy boundless might  
In conquest o'er the tenth part of a grain.  
And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles,  
To give his tottering faith a solid base.  
Why call for less than is already thine?  
Thou art no novice in theology;  
What is a miracle?—'tis a reproach,  
'Tis an implicit satire on mankind,  
And while it satisfies it censures too.  
To common-sense great Nature's course proclaims  
A Deity. When mankind falls asleep,

A miracle is sent as an alarm  
To wake the world, and prove him o'er again,  
By recent argument, but not more strong.  
Say which imports more plenitude of power,  
Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?  
To make a sun, or stop his midcareer?  
To countermand his orders, and send back  
The flaming courier to the frightened East,  
Warm'd and astonish'd at his evening ray?  
Or bid the moon, as with her journey tir'd,  
In Ajalon's soft flow'ry vale repose\*?  
Great things are these; still greater to create.  
From Adam's bow'r look down through the whole  
train

Of miracles;—resistless is their power?  
They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,  
Than this, call'd unmiraculous survey,  
If duly weigh'd, if rationally seen,  
If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,  
Sees nought but spangles here; the fool, no more.  
Say'st thou, 'The course of Nature governs all?'  
The course of Nature is the art of God.  
The miracles thou call'st for this attest;  
For say, could Nature Nature's course control?

But, miracles apart, who sees him not  
Nature's Controller, Author, Guide, and End?  
Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face,  
But must inquire—'What hand behind the scene,  
What arm Almighty, put these wheeling globes  
In motion, and wound up the vast machine?

\* Joshua x. 12, 13.

Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?  
Who bowl'd them flaming through the dark profound,

Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew,  
Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,  
And set the bosom of old Night on fire,  
Peopled her desert, and made Horror smile?  
Or if the military style delights thee,  
(For stars have fought their battles, leagued with man)

‘ Who marshals this bright host? enrols their names,

Appoints their posts, their marches, and returns,  
Punctual, at stated periods? who disbands  
These veteran troops, their final duty done,  
If e'er disbanded?’—HE, whose potent word,  
Like the loud trumpet, levy'd first their powers  
In Night's inglorious empire, where they slept  
In beds of darkness; arm'd them with fierce flames;  
Arrang'd, and disciplin'd, and cloth'd in gold,  
And call'd them out of Chaos to the field,  
Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.  
O let us join this army! joining these  
Will give us hearts intrepid at that hour  
When brighter flames shall cut a darker night;  
When these strong demonstrations of a God  
Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,  
And one eternal curtain cover all!

Struck at that thought, as new-awak'd, I lift  
A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars  
To man still more propitious, and their aid  
(Though guiltless of idolatry) implore,

Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.  
O ye dividers of my time! ye bright  
Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,  
In your fair kalendar distinctly mark'd!  
Since that authentic, radiant register,  
Though man inspects it not, stands good against  
him;  
Since you and years roll on, though man stands still,  
Teach me my days to number, and apply  
My trembling heart to wisdom\*, now beyond  
All shadow of excuse for fooling on.  
Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside  
The snares keen appetite and passion spread  
To catch stray souls; and woe to that gray head  
Whose folly would undo what age has done!  
Aid, then, aid, all ye Stars!—Much rather thou,  
Great Artist! thou whose finger set aright  
This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,  
Though intervolv'd, exact, and pointing out  
Life's rapid and irrevocable flight  
With such an index fair as none can miss  
Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is clos'd.  
Open mine eye, dread Deity! to read  
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to see  
Things as they are, unalter'd through the glass  
Of worldly wishes. Time, Eternity!  
(Tis these mismeasur'd ruin all mankind)  
Set them before me; let me lay them both  
In equal scale, and learn their various weight.  
Let Time appear a moment, as it is;

\* Psalm xc. 12.

And let Eternity's full orb, at once,  
Turn on my soul, and strike it into Heaven.  
When shall I see far more than charms me now?  
Gaze on Creation's model in thy breast  
Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more?  
When this vile, foreign dust, which smothers all  
That travel Earth's deep vale, shall I shake off?  
When shall my soul her incarnation quit,  
And, re-adopted to thy bless'd embrace,  
Obtain her apotheosis in thee?—

Dost think, Lorenzo! this is wandering wide?  
No, 'tis directly striking at the mark.  
To wake thy dead devotion was my point;  
And how I bless Night's consecrating shades,  
Which to a temple turn an universe,  
Fill us with great ideas, full of Heaven,  
An antidote the pestilential earth!  
In every storm that either frowns or falls,  
What an asylum has the soul in prayer!  
And what a fane is this in which to pray!  
And what a God must dwell in such a fane!  
O what a genius must inform the skies!  
And is Lorenzo's salamander-heart  
Cold, and untouch'd, amid these sacred fires?  
O ye nocturnal sparks! ye glowing embers,  
On Heaven's broad hearth! who burn, or burn no  
more,  
Who blaze, or die, as great Jehovah's breath  
Or blows you, or forbears, assist my song;  
Pour your whole influence; exorcise his heart,  
So long possess'd, and bring him back to man.  
And is Lorenzo a demurrer still?

Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest  
Truths which, contested, put thy parts to shame.  
Nor shame they more Lorenzo's head than heart,  
A faithless heart, how despicably small!  
Too strait, aught great, or generous, to receive!  
Fill'd with an atom! fill'd and foul'd with self!  
And self-mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!  
Instincts and passions of the nobler kind  
Lie suffocated there, or they alone,  
Reason apart, would wake high hope, and open,  
To ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere  
Where Order, Wisdom, Goodness, Providence,  
Their endless miracles of love display,  
And promise all the truly great desire.  
The mind that would be happy must be great;  
Great in its wishes, great in its surveys.  
Extended views a narrow mind extend,  
Push out its corrugate, expansive make,  
Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace.  
A man of compass makes a man of worth;  
Divine contemplate, and become divine.

As man was made for glory and for bliss,  
All littleness is in approach to woe.  
Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,  
And let in manhood; let in happiness;  
Admit the boundless theatre of thought  
From nothing, up to God, which makes a man.  
Take God from Nature, nothing great is left;  
Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees;  
Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.  
Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;  
See thy distress! how close art thou besieg'd!



Besieg'd by Nature, the proud sceptic's foe!  
Inclos'd by these innumerable worlds,  
Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,  
As in a golden net of Providence,  
How art thou caught, sure captive of belief!  
From this thy bless'd captivity what art,  
What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free!  
This scene is Heaven's indulgent violence;  
Canst thou bear up against this tide of glory?  
What is earth bosom'd in these ambient orbs,  
But faith in God impos'd, and press'd on man?  
Dar'st thou still litigate thy desperate cause,  
Spite of these numerous, awful witnesses,  
And doubt the deposition of the skies?  
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!

Laborious! 'tis impracticable quite;  
To sink beyond a doubt in this debate,  
With all its weight of wisdom and of will,  
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.  
Some wish they did, but no man disbelieves.  
God is a spirit; spirit cannot strike  
These gross material organs: God by man  
As much is seen, as man a God can see,  
In these astonishing exploits of power.  
What order, beauty, motion, distance, size!  
Concertion of design, how exquisite!  
How complicate in their divine police!  
Apt means! great ends! consent to general good!  
Each attribute of these material gods,  
So long (and that with specious pleas) ador'd,  
A separate conquest gains o'er rebel thought,  
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.

Lorenzo! this may seem harangue to thee;  
Such all is apt to seem that thwarts our will.  
And dost thou, then, demand a simple proof  
Of this great master-moral of the skies,  
Unskill'd, or disinclin'd, to read it there?  
Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,  
Take it in one compact, unbroken chain.  
Such proof insists on an attentive ear,  
'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,  
And, for thy notice struggle with the world.  
Retire;—the world shut out;—thy thoughts call  
home;—

Imagination's airy wing repress;—  
Lock up thy senses;—let no passion stir;—  
Wake all to Reason;—let her reign alone;—  
Then in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth  
Of Nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,  
As I have done, and shall inquire no more.  
In Nature's channel, thus the questions run:—  
‘What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know  
But that I am; and since I am, conclude  
Something eternal: had there e'er been nought,  
Nought still had been: eternal there must be.—  
But what eternal? Why not human race?  
And Adam's ancestors without an end?—  
That's hard to be conceiv'd, since every link  
Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail.  
Can every part depend, and not the whole?  
Yet grant it true, new difficulties rise;  
I'm still quite out at sea; nor see the shore.  
Whence earth, and these bright orbs? Eternal too?  
Grant matter was eternal, still these orbs

Would want some other father;—much design  
Is seen in all their motions, all their makes.  
Design implies intelligence and art;  
That can't be from themselves—or man: that art  
Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow?  
And nothing greater yet allow'd than man.—  
Who motion, foreign to the smallest grain,  
Shot through vast masses of enormous weight?  
Who bid brute matter's restive lump assume  
Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?  
Has matter innate motion? then each atom,  
Asserting its indisputable right  
To dance, would form an universe of dust.  
Has matter none? then whence these glorious forms  
And boundless flights, from shapeless and repos'd?  
Has matter more than motion? has it thought,  
Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learn'd  
In mathematics? has it fram'd such laws,  
Which but to guess a Newton\* made immortal?—  
If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,  
Who think a clod inferior to a man!  
If art to form, and counsel to conduct,  
And that with greater far than human skill,  
Resides not in each block,—a Godhead reigns.—  
Grant, then, invisible, eternal Mind;  
That granted, all is solv'd:—but granting that,  
Draw I not o'er me a still darker cloud?  
Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive?  
A being without origin or end!—  
Hail, human Liberty! there is no God—

\* Sir Isaac Newton.

Yet, why? on either scheme that knot subsists;  
Subsist it must in God or human race;  
If in the last, how many knots beside,  
Indissoluble all?—why choose it there  
Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?  
Reject it where, that chosen, all the rest,  
Dispers'd, leave Reason's whole horizon clear?—  
This is not Reason's dictate; Reason says,  
Close with the side where one grain turns the scale.  
What vast preponderance is here! can Reason  
With louder voice exclaim—' Believe a God?'  
And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.  
What things impossible must man think true  
On any other system? and how strange  
To disbelieve through mere credulity!

    If in this chain Lorenzo finds no flaw,  
Let it for ever bind him to belief.  
And where the link in which a flaw he finds?  
And if a God there is, that God how great!  
How great that Power whose providential care  
Through these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray!  
Of Nature universal threads the whole!  
And hangs creation, like a precious gem,  
Though little, on the footstool of his throne!

    That little gem how large! A weight let fall  
From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach  
This distant earth? Say, then, Lorenzo! where,  
Where ends this mighty building? where begin  
The suburbs of creation? where the wall  
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale  
Of non-existence, Nothing's strange abode?  
Say at what point of space Jehovah dropp'd

His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;  
 Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite no more?  
 Where rears his terminating pillar high  
 Its extra-mundane head? and says to gods,  
 In characters illustrious as the sun,  
 ' I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce  
 The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd:  
 Shout, all ye gods! nor shout, ye gods, alone;  
 Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,  
 That rests, or rolls, ye Heights and Depths, resound!  
 Resound! resound! ye Depths and Heights, re-  
 sound!'

Hard are those questions?—answer harder still.  
 Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,  
 The solitary son of Pow'r Divine?  
 Or has the' Almighty Father, with a breath,  
 Impregnated the womb of distant Space?  
 Has he not bid, in various provinces,  
 Brother-creations the dark bowels burst  
 Of Night primeval, barren now no more?  
 And he the central sun, transpiercing all  
 Those giant-generations which disport,  
 And dance as motes, in his meridian ray,  
 That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd  
 In that abyss of horror whence they sprung;  
 While Chaos triumphs, repossess of all  
 Rival creation ravish'd from his throne?  
 Chaos! of Nature both the womb and grave!

Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo! spreads too  
 wide?

Is this extravagant?—No; this is just;  
 Just in conjecture, though 'twere false in fact.

If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung  
From noble root, high thought of the Most High.  
But wherefore error? who can prove it such?—  
He that can set Omnipotence a bound.  
Can man conceive beyond what God can do?  
Nothing but quite impossible is hard.  
He summons into being, with like ease,  
A whole creation, and a single grain.  
Speaks he the word? a thousand worlds are born!  
A thousand worlds? there's space for millions more;  
And in what space can his great fiat fail?  
Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge  
The warm imagination: why condemn?  
Why not indulge such thoughts as swell our hearts  
With fuller admiration of that Power  
Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to  
swell?

Why not indulge in his augmented praise?  
Darts not his glory a still brighter ray,  
The less is left to Chaos, and the realms  
Of hideous Night, where Fancy strays aghast,  
And, though most talkative, makes no report?

Still seems my thought enormous? think again;—  
Experience 'self shall aid thy lame belief.  
Glasses (that revelation to the sight!)  
Have they not led us in the deep disclose  
Of fine-spun Nature, exquisitely small,  
And, though demonstrated, still ill-conceiv'd?  
If, then, on the reverse the mind would mount  
In magnitude; what mind can mount too far,  
To keep the balance, and creation poise?  
Defect alone can err on such a theme:

What is too great, if we the cause survey?  
Stupendous Architect! thou, thou art all!  
My soul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,  
And finds herself but at the centre still!  
I AM thy name! existence all thine own!  
Creation's nothing, flatter'd much if styl'd  
'The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God.'

O for the voice—of what? of whom?—what voice  
Can answer to my wants, in such ascent  
As dares to deem one universe too small?  
Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now fancy grows,  
Fir'd in the vortex of Almighty power)  
Is not this home-creation, in the map  
Of universal Nature, as a speck,  
Like fair Britannia, in our little ball;  
Exceeding fair and glorious, for its size,  
But, elsewhere, far outmeasur'd, far outshone?  
In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)  
Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost  
Too small for notice in the vast of being;  
Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space  
From other realms; from ample continents  
Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;  
Less northern, less remote from Deity,  
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme;  
Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth  
Luxuriant growths nor the late autumn wait  
Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?

Yet why drown Fancy in such depths as these?  
Return, presumptuous Rover! and confess  
The bounds of man, nor blame them, as too small.  
Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen?

Full ample the dominions of the sun!  
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,  
The matchless monarch from his flaming throne,  
Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,  
Farther and faster than a thought can fly,  
And feeds his planets with eternal fires!  
This Heliopolis, by greater far  
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile was built,  
And he alone who built it can destroy.  
Beyond this city why strays human thought?  
One wonderful enough for man to know!  
One infinite enough for man to range!  
One firmament enough for man to read!  
O what voluminous instruction here!  
What page of wisdom is denied him? none,  
If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.  
Nor is instruction here our only gain:  
There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,  
Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts.  
How eloquently shines the glowing pole!  
With what authority it gives its charge,  
Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,  
Though silent, loud! heard earth around; above  
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell;  
Hell has her wonder, though too proud to praise.  
Is earth, then, more infernal? has she those  
Who neither praise (Lorenzo!) nor admire?  
Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engag'd,  
Ne'er ask'd the moon one question; never held  
Least correspondence with a single star;  
Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of Heaven  
Walking in brightness, or her train ador'd.



Their sublunary rivals have long since  
Engross'd his whole devotion; stars malign,  
Which made their fond astronomer run mad,  
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;  
Cause him to sacrifice his frame and peace  
To momentary madness, call'd delight.  
Idolater more gross than ever kiss'd  
The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out  
The blood to Jove!—O thou, to whom belongs  
All sacrifice! O thou great Jove unfeign'd!  
Divine Instructor! thy first volume this  
For man's perusal; all in capitals!  
In moon and stars (Heaven's golden alphabet!)  
Emblaz'd to seize the sight, who runs may read;  
Who reads can understand. 'Tis unconfin'd  
To Christian land or Jewry; fairly writ,  
In language universal, to mankind:  
A language lofty to the learn'd, yet plain  
To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,  
Or from its husk strike out the bounding grain:  
A language worthy the great Mind that speaks!  
Preface and comment to the sacred page!  
Which oft refers its reader to the skies,  
As presupposing his first lesson there,  
And scripture 'self a fragment, that unread.  
Stupendous book of wisdom to the wise! .  
Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee.  
By thee much open'd, I confess, O Night!  
Yet more I wish; but how shall I prevail?  
Say, gentle Night! whose modest, maiden beams,  
Give us a new creation, and present  
The world's great picture soften'd to the sight;

Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,  
Say thou, whose mild dominion's silver key  
Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view  
Worlds beyond number, worlds conceal'd by day  
Behind the proud and envious star of noon!  
Canst thou not draw a deeper scene?—and show  
The mighty Potentate, to whom belong  
These rich regalia, pompously display'd  
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz\*,  
I gaze around; I search on every side—  
O for a glimpse of Him my soul adores!  
As the chas'd hart, amid the desert waste,  
Pants for the living stream, for Him who made her  
So pants the thirsty soul amid the blank  
Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess! where?  
Where blazes his bright court? where burns his  
throne?

Thou know'st, for thou art near him; by thee, round  
His grand pavilion, sacred Fame reports  
The sable curtain's drawn. If not, can none  
Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,  
Who travel far, discover where he dwells?  
A star his dwelling pointed out below†.  
Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazonoth!  
And thou, Orion‡! of still keener eye!  
Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,  
And bring them out of tempest into port!  
On which hand must I bend my course to find him?  
These courtiers keep the secret of their King;

\* Job.

† Matthew ii. 2.

‡ Names of several constellations in the Heavens.

I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.

I wake, and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale  
From sphere to sphere, the steps by Nature set  
For man's ascent, at once to tempt and aid;  
To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought,  
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.

In ardent Contemplation's rapid car,  
From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.  
How swift I mount! diminish'd earth recedes:  
I pass the moon; and, from her farther side,  
Pierce Heaven's blue curtain; strike into remote;  
Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage  
His artificial airy journey takes,  
And no celestial lengthens human sight.  
I pause at every planet on my road,  
And ask for him who gives their orbs to roll,  
Their foreheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring,  
In which of earths an army might be lost,  
With the bold comet take my bolder flight,  
Amid those sovereign glories of the skies,  
Of independent, native lustre proud;  
The souls of systems! and the lords of life,  
Through their wide empires!—What behold I now?  
A wilderness of wonders burning round,  
Where larger suns inhabit higher spheres;  
Perhaps the villas of descending gods!  
Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun;  
'Tis but the threshold of the Deity;  
Or, far beneath it, I am grovelling still.  
Nor is it strange; I built on a mistake:  
The grandeur of his works, whence Folly sought  
For aid, to Reason sets his glory higher;

Who built thus high for worms (mere worm to him,)

O where, Lorenzo! must the builder dwell?

Pause, then, and, for a moment, here respire—  
If human thought can keep its station here.

Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,

O Sun?—Is the sun turn'd recluse?—and are  
His boasted expeditions short to mine?—

To mine how short! On Nature's Alps I stand,  
And see a thousand firmaments beneath!

A thousand systems! as a thousand grains!

So much a stranger, and so late arriv'd,

How can man's curious spirit not inquire

What are the natives of this world sublime,

Of this so foreign, unterrestrial sphere,

Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd?

' O ye, as distant from my little home

As swiftest sun-beams in an age can fly;

Far from my native element I roam,

In quest of new and wonderful to man.

What province this, of his immense domain,

Whom all obey? or mortals here, or gods?

Ye borderers on the coasts of bliss! what are you?

A colony from Heaven? or only rais'd,

By frequent visit from Heaven's neighbouring  
realms,

To secondary gods, and half-divine?—

Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,

Far other life you live, far other tongue

You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,

Than man. How various are the works of God!

But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthron'd,  
And absolute? or Sense in arms against her?  
Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?  
Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?  
And had your Eden an abstemious Eve?  
Or Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree,  
And ask their Adams—"Who would not be wise?"  
Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd?  
And if redeem'd—is your Redeemer scorn'd?  
Is this your final residence? if not,  
Change you your scene translated, or by death?  
And if by death, what death?—Know you disease?  
Or horrid war?—With war, this fatal hour,  
Europa groans (so call we a small field,  
Where kings run mad.) In our world, Death de-  
putes

Intemperance to do the work of Age,  
And, hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,  
As slow of execution, for dispatch  
Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay  
Their sheep (the silly sheep they fleec'd before)  
And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal.  
Sit all your executioners on thrones?  
With you can rage for plunder make a god?  
And bloodshed wash out every other stain?—  
But you, perhaps, can't bleed; from matter gross  
Your spirits clean are delicately clad  
In fine-spun ether, privileg'd to soar,  
Unloaded, uninfected. How unlike  
The lot of man! how few of human race  
By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage  
Self-war eternal!—Is your painful day

Of hardy conflict o'er? or are you still  
Raw candidates at school? and have you those  
Who disaffect reversions, as with us!—  
But what are we? you never heard of man,  
Or earth, the bedlam of the universe!  
Where Reason (undiseas'd with you) runs mad,  
And nurses Folly's children as her own,  
Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount  
Of holiness, where Reason is pronounc'd  
Infallible, and thunders like a god,  
Ev'n there, by saints the demons are outdone;  
What these think wrong our saints refine to right,  
And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts;  
Satan, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—  
But this how strange to you who know not man?  
Has the least rumour of our race arriv'd?  
Call'd here Elijah, in his flaming car\*?  
Past by you the good Enoch†, on his road  
To those fair fields whence Lucifer was hurl'd;  
Who brush'd, perhaps, your sphere in his descent,  
Stain'd your pure crystal ether, or let fall  
A short eclipse from his portentous shade?  
O that the fiend had lodg'd on some broad orb  
Athwart his way, nor reach'd his present home,  
Then blacken'd earth, with footsteps foul'd in hell,  
Nor wash'd in ocean, as from Rome he past  
To Britain's isle, too, too conspicuous there!

But this is all digression: where is He  
That o'er Heaven's battlements the felon-hurl'd  
To groans, and chains, and darkness? where is He

\* 2 Kings ii. 11.

† Genesis v. 24.

Who sees creation's summit in a vale?  
He whom, while man is man, he can't but seek,  
And if he finds, commences more than man?  
O for a telescope his throne to reach!  
Tell me, ye learn'd on earth! or bless'd above!  
Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels! tell  
Where your great Master's orb? his planets where?  
Those conscious satellites, those morning-stars,  
First-born of Deity! from central love,  
By veneration most profound, thrown off;  
By sweet attraction no less strongly drawn;  
Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; raptur'd, yet serene;  
Past thought illustrious, but with borrow'd beams;  
In still approaching circles still remote,  
Revolving round the sun's eternal Sire!  
Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies  
To nations—in what latitude?—beyond  
Terrestrial thought's horizon!—and on what  
High errands sent?—Here human effort ends,  
And leaves me still a stranger to his throne.

Full well it might! I quite mistook my road;  
Born in an age more curious than devout,  
More fond to fix the place of Heaven or hell,  
Than studious this to shun, or that secure.  
'Tis not the curious but the pious path  
That leads me to my point. Lorenzo! know,  
Without or star or angel for their guide,  
Who worship God shall find him. Humble Love,  
And not proud Reason, keeps the door of Heaven;  
Love finds admission where proud Science fails.  
Man's science is the culture of his heart,  
And not to lose his plummet in the depths

Of Nature, or the more profound of God.  
Either to know is an attempt that sets  
The wisest on a level with the fool.  
To fathom Nature (ill-attempted here!)  
Past doubt is deep philosophy above;  
Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,  
As deeper learn'd, the deepest learning still.  
For what a thunder of Omnipotence  
(So might I dare to speak) is seen in all!  
In man! in earth! in more amazing skies!  
Teaching this lesson Pride is loth to learn—  
'Not deeply to discern, not much to know,  
Mankind was born to wonder and adore.'

And is there cause for higher wonder still  
Than that which struck us from our past surveys?  
Yes; and for deeper adoration too.  
From my late airy travel unconfin'd,  
Have I learn'd nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo! this;  
Each of these stars is a religious house;  
I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,  
And heard hosannahs ring through every sphere,  
A seminary fraught with future gods.  
Nature all o'er is consecrated ground,  
Teeming with growths immortal and divine.  
The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand  
Leaves nothing waste, but sows these fiery fields  
With seeds of Reason, which to virtues rise  
Beneath his genial ray; and, if escap'd  
The pestilential blasts of stubborn will,  
When grown mature are gather'd for the skies.  
And is devotion thought too much on earth,  
When beings, so superior, homage boast,



And triumph in prostrations to the throne?

But wherefore more of planets or of stars?  
Ethereal journies, and, discover'd there,  
Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,  
All Nature sending incense to the throne,  
Except the bold Lorenzos of our sphere?  
Op'ning the solemn sources of my soul,  
Since I have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus,  
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,  
Nor see of fancy or of fact what more  
Invites the Muse—here turn we and review  
Our past nocturnal landscape wide;—then say,  
Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burst of heart  
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,  
Must man exclaim, adoring and aghast?  
' O what a root! O what a branch is here!  
O what a Father! what a family!  
Worlds! systems! and creations!—and creations,  
In one agglomerated cluster hung,  
Great Vine\*! on thee, on thee the cluster hangs,  
The filial cluster! infinitely spread  
In glowing globes, with various being fraught,  
And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.  
Or, shall I say (for who can say enough?)  
A constellation of ten thousand gems!  
(And O, of what dimension! of what weight!)  
Set in one signet, flames on the right hand  
Of Majesty divine! The blazing seal,  
That deeply stamps, on all created mind,  
Indelible, his sovereign attributes,

\* John xv. 1.

Omnipotence and Love! that passing bound,  
 And this surpassing that. Nor stop we here  
 For want of power in God, but thought in man.  
 Ev'n this acknowledg'd leaves us still in debt;  
 If greater aught, that greater all is thine,  
 Dread Sire!—Accept this miniature of thee,  
 And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,  
 In which archangels might have fail'd unblam'd.'

How such ideas of the' Almighty's power,  
 And such ideas of the' Almighty's plan,  
 (Ideas not absurd) distend the thought  
 Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!  
 The fulness of the Deity breaks forth  
 In inconceivables to men and gods.  
 Think, then, O think, nor ever drop the thought,  
 How low must man descend when gods adore!  
 Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast?  
 Did I not tell thee ' We would mount, Lorenzo!  
 And kindle our devotion at the stars?'

And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?  
 And art all adamant? and dost confute,  
 All urg'd, with one irrefragable smile?  
 Lorenzo! mirth how miserable here!  
 Swear by the stars, by Him who made them, swear,  
 Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they:  
 Then thou, like them, shalt shine; like them, shalt  
     rise

From low to lofty, from obscure to bright,  
 By due gradation, Nature's sacred law.  
 The stars from whence?—ask Chaos—he can tell.  
 These bright temptations to idolatry  
 From darkness and confusion took their birth;

Sons of Deformity! from fluid dregs  
Tartarean first they rose to masses rude,  
And then to spheres opaque; then dimly shone,  
Then brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day.  
Nature delights in progress, in advance  
From worse to better; but when minds ascend,  
Progress, in part, depends upon themselves.  
Heaven aids exertion. Greater makes the great.  
The voluntary little lessens more.

O be a man! and thou shalt be a god!  
And half self-made!—ambition how divine!

O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone!  
Still undevout? unkindled?—though high taught,  
School'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars,  
Rank coward to the fashionable world!  
Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heaven?  
Curs'd fume of pride, exhal'd from deepest hell!  
Pride in religion is man's highest praise.  
Bent on destruction! and in love with death!  
Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once,  
Were half so sad as one benighted mind,  
Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.  
How, like a widow in her weeds, the Night,  
Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits!  
How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps  
Perpetual dews, and saddens Nature's scene!  
A scence more sad sin makes the darken'd soul,  
All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

Though blind of heart, still open is thine eye.  
Why such magnificence in all thou seest?  
Of matter's grandeur, know one end is this,  
To tell the rational, who gazes on it—

‘ Though that immensely great, still greater he  
Whose breast capacious, can embrace and lodge,  
Unburthen’d, Nature’s universal scheme;  
Can grasp creation with a single thought;  
Creation grasp, and not exclude its Sire.’—  
To tell him farther—‘ It behoves him much  
To guard the’ important yet depending fate  
Of being, brighter than a thousand suns;  
One single ray of thought outshines them all.’—  
And if man hears obedient, soon he’ll soar  
Superior heights, and on his purple wing,  
His purple wing bedropp’d with eyes of gold,  
Rising, where thought is now denied to rise,  
Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.

Why then persist?—no mortal ever liv’d  
But, dying, he pronounc’d (when words are true)  
The whole that charms thee absolutely vain;  
Vain, and far worse!—Think thou with dying men;  
O condescend to think as angels think!  
O tolerate a chance for happiness!  
Our nature such, ill-choice ensures ill fate;  
And hell had been, though there had been no God.  
Dost thou not know, my new Astronomer!  
Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man?  
Man turning from his God, brings endless night;  
Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,  
Amend no manners, and expect no peace.  
How deep the darkness! and the groan how loud!  
And far, how far, from lambent are the flames!—  
Such is Lorenzo’s purchase! such his praise!  
The proud, the politic Lorenzo’s praise!  
Though in his ear, and levell’d at his heart;

I've half read o'er the volume of the skies.

For think not thou hast heard all this from me;  
My song but echoes what great Nature speaks.  
What has she spoken?—Thus the goddess spoke,  
Thus speaks for ever:—' Place, at Nature's head,  
A Sov'reign which o'er all things rolls his eye,  
Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,  
But, above all, diffuses endless good;  
To whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly,  
The vile for mercy, and the pain'd for peace;  
By whom the various tenants of these spheres,  
Diversify'd in fortunes, place, and powers,  
Rais'd in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,  
Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)  
At that bless'd fountain-head from which they  
stream,

Where conflict past redoubles present joy,  
And present joy looks forward on increase,  
And that on more; no period! every step  
A double boon! a promise and a bliss.'  
How easy sits this scheme on human hearts!  
It suits their make, it soothes their vast desires;  
Passion is pleas'd, and Reason asks no more:  
'Tis rational! 'tis great!—but what is thine?  
It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!  
Leaves us quite naked, both of help and hope,  
Sinking from bad to worse; few years the sport  
Of Fortune, then the morsel of despair.

Say, then, Lorenzo! (for thou know'st it well)  
What's vice?—mere want of compass in our thought.  
Religion what?—the proof of common sense.  
How art thou hooted where the least prevails!  
Is it my fault if these truths call thee Fool?

And thou shalt never be miscall'd by me.  
Can neither Shame nor Terror stand thy friend?  
And art thou still an insect in the mire?  
How like thy guardian angel have I flown,  
Snatch'd thee from earth, escorted thee through all  
The' ethereal armies, walk'd thee, like a god,  
Through splendours of first magnitude, arrang'd  
On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet;  
Close-cruiz'd on the bright paradise of God,  
And almost introduc'd thee to the throne!  
And art thou still carousing, for delight,  
Rank poison! first fermenting to mere froth,  
And then subsisting into final gall?  
To beings of sublime, immortal make,  
How shocking is all joy whose end is sure!  
Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms!  
And dost thou choose what ends ere well begun,  
And infamous as short? and dost thou choose  
(Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet)  
To wade into perdition through contempt,  
Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?  
For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,  
And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow;  
For, by strong Guilt's most violent assault,  
Conscience is but disabled, not destroy'd.

O thou most awful being! and most vain!  
Thy will how frail! how glorious is thy power!  
Though dread Eternity has sown her seeds  
Of bliss and woe in thy despotic breast;  
Though Heaven and hell depend upon thy choice,  
A butterfly comes cross, and both are fled.  
Is this the picture of a rational?  
This horrid image, shall it be most just?

Lorenzo! no; it cannot,—shall not be,  
If there is force in reason, or in sounds  
Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon  
A magic, at this planetary hour,  
When Slumber locks the general lip, and dreams,  
Through senseless mazes, hunt souls uninspir'd.  
Attend—the sacred mysteries begin—  
My solemn night-born adjuration hear:  
Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust,  
While the stars gaze on this enchantment new;  
Enchantment not infernal, but divine!

‘ By Silence, Death’s peculiar attribute;  
By Darkness, Guilt’s inevitable doom;  
By Darkness and by Silence, sisters dread!  
That draw the curtain round Night’s ebon throne,  
And raise ideas solemn as the scene!  
By Night, and all of awful Night, presents  
To thought or sense (of awful much, to both,  
The goddess brings!) By these her trembling fires,  
Like Vesta’s, ever burning, and, like her’s,  
Sacred to thoughts immaculate and pure!  
By these bright orators that prove and praise,  
And press thee to revere the Deity,  
Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever’d, awhile,  
To reach his throne, as stages of the soul  
Through which, at different periods, she shall pass,  
Refining gradual, for her final height,  
And purging off some dross at every sphere!  
By this dark pall thrown o’er the silent world!  
By the world’s kings and kingdoms most renown’d,  
From short Ambition’s zenith set for ever,  
Sad presage to vain boasters, now in bloom!

By the long list of swift mortality,  
From Adam downward to this evening knell,  
Which midnight waves in Fancy's startled eye,  
And shocks her with an hundred centuries,  
Round Death's black banner throng'd in human  
thought!

By thousands, now, resigning their last breath,  
And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear!  
By tombs o'er tombs arising, human earth  
Ejected, to make room for—human earth,  
The monarch's terror! and the sexton's trade!  
By pompous obsequies that shun the day,  
The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,  
Which makes poor man's humiliation proud,  
Boast of our ruin! triumph of our dust!  
By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones,  
And the pale lamp that shows the ghastly dead,  
More ghastly, through the thick incumbent gloom!  
By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,  
The gliding spectre! and the groaning grave!  
By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan  
For the grave's shelter! By desponding men,  
Senseless to pains of death from pangs of guilt!  
By Guilt's last audit! By yon moon in blood,  
The rocking firmament, the falling stars,  
And thunder's last discharge, great Nature's knell!  
By second Chaos; and eternal Night.'—  
Be wise—nor let Philander blame my charm;  
But own not ill-discharg'd my double debt,  
Love to the living, duty to the dead.

For know, I'm but executor; he left  
This moral legacy; I make it o'er



By his command: Philander hear in me,  
And Heaven in both.—If deaf to these, oh! hear  
Florello's tender voice; his weal depends  
On thy resolve; it trembles at thy choice:  
For his sake—love thyself: example strikes  
All human hearts; a bad example more,  
More still a father's; that ensures his ruin.  
As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove  
The' unnatural parent of his miseries,  
And make him curse the being which thou gav'st?  
Is this the blessing of so foud a father?  
If careless of Lorenzo! spare, oh! spare  
Florello's father, and Philander's friend!  
Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him;  
And from Philander's friend the world expects  
A conduct no dishonour to the dead.  
Let passion do what nobler motive should;  
Let love and emulation rise in aid  
To reason, and persuade thee to be—bless'd.

This seems not a request to be denied;  
Yet (such the' infatuation of mankind!)  
'Tis the most hopeless man can make to man.  
Shall I then rise in argument and warmth?  
And urge Philander's posthumous advice,  
From topics yet unbroach'd?——  
But, oh! I faint! my spirits fail!—nor strange!  
So long on wing, and in no middle clime!  
To which my great Creator's glory call'd;  
And calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand  
Has strok'd my drooping lips, and promises  
My long arrear of rest: the downy god  
(Wont to return with our returning peace)

Will pay, ere long, and bless me with repose.  
 Haste, haste, sweet stranger! from the peasant's cot,  
 The ship-boy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,  
 Whence Sorrow never chas'd thee; with thee bring  
 Not hideous visions, as of late, but draughts  
 Delicious of well-tasted cordial rest,  
 Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,  
 That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play  
 The various movements of this nice machine,  
 Which asks such frequent periods of repair.  
 When tir'd with vain rotations of the day,  
 Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn,  
 Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,  
 Or Death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends:  
 When will it end with me?

——' THOU only know'st  
 Thou, whose broad eye the future and the past  
 Joins to the present, making one of three  
 To moral thought! thou know'st, and thou alone,  
 All-knowing!—all unknown!—and yet well known!  
 Near, though remote! and, though unfathom'd, felt!  
 And, though invisible, for ever seen!  
 And seen in all! the great and the minute:  
 Each globe above, with its gigantic race,  
 Each flow'r, each leaf, with its small people swarm'd,  
 (Those puny vouchers of Omnipotence!)  
 To the first thought that asks "From whence?"  
 declare

Their common source: thou fountain, running o'er  
 In rivers of communicated joy!  
 Who gav'st us speech for far, far humbler themes!  
 Say by what name shall I presume to call

Him I see burning in these countless suns,  
As Moses in the bush? Illustrious Mind!  
The whole creation less, far less, to thee, .  
Than that to the creation's ample round,  
How shall I name thee?—how my labouring soul  
Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!

‘ Great System of perfections! mighty Cause  
Of causes mighty! Cause uncaus'd! sole root  
Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God!  
First Father of effects! that progeny  
Of endless series, where the golden chain's  
Last link admits a period who can tell?  
Father of all that is or heard or hears!  
Father of all that is or seen or sees!  
Father of all that is or shall arise!  
Father of this immeasurable mass  
Of matter multiform, or dense or rare,  
Opaque or lucid, rapid or at rest,  
Minute or passing bound! in each extreme  
Of like amaze and mystery to man.  
Father of these bright millions of the night!  
Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,  
And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, say,  
Is appellation higher still thy choice?  
Father of matter's temporary lords!  
Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks  
Of high paternal glory, rich endow'd  
With various measures, and with various modes  
Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams  
More pale or bright from day divine, to break  
The dark of matter organiz'd (the ware  
Of all created spirit) beams that rise

Each over other in superior light,  
Till the last ripens into lustre strong,  
Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond  
(Far fonder than ere bore that name on earth)  
Of intellectual beings! beings bless'd  
With pow'rs to please thee, not of passive ply  
To laws they know not; beings lodg'd in seats  
Of well-adapted joys, in different domes  
Of this imperial palace for thy sons;  
Of this proud, populous, well-policy'd,  
Though boundless habitation, plann'd by thee;  
Whose several clans their several climates suit,  
And transposition, doubtless, would destroy.  
Or, oh! indulge, immortal King! indulge  
A title less august, indeed, but more  
Endearing; ah! how sweet in human ears!  
Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!  
Father of immortality to man!  
A theme that lately\* set my soul on fire—  
And Thou the next! yet equal! thou by whom  
That blessing was convey'd, far more! was bought,  
Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds  
Were made, and one redeem'd! illustrious Light  
From light illustrious! thou, whose regal power,  
Finite in time, but infinite in space,  
On more than adamantine basis fix'd,  
O'er more, far more, than diadems and thrones  
Inviolably reigns, the dread of gods!  
And, oh! the friend of man! beneath whose foot,  
And by the mandate of whose awful nod,

\* Nights the Sixth and Seventh.

All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,  
Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll  
Through the short channels of expiring time,  
Or shoreless ocean of eternity,  
Calm or tempestuous (as thy Spirit breathes)  
In absolute subjection!—And, O THOU!  
The glorious third! distinct, not separate!  
Beaming from both! with both incorporate,  
And (strange to tell!) incorporate with dust!  
By condescension, as thy glory, great,  
Enshrin'd in man! of human hearts, if pure,  
Divine Inhabitant! the tie divine  
Of Heaven with distant earth! by whom, I trust,  
(If not inspir'd) uncensur'd this address  
To thee, to them—to whom? mysterious power!  
Reveal'd—yet unreveal'd! darkness in light!  
Number in unity! our joy! our dread!  
The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin!  
That animates all right, the triple sun!  
Sun of the soul! her never-setting sun!  
Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,  
Absconding, yet demonstrable, Great God!  
Greater than greatest! better than the best!  
Kinder than kindest! with soft Pity's eye,  
Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,  
From thy bright home, from that high firmament  
Where thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt;  
Beyond archangels' unassisted ken,  
From far above what mortals highest call,  
From Elevation's pinnacle, look down,  
Through—what? confounding interval! through all,  
And more, than labouring Fancy can conceive;

Through radiant ranks of essences unknown;  
Through hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd  
Round various banners of Omnipotence,  
With endless change of rapturous duties fir'd;  
Through wondrous beings' interposing swarms,  
All clustering at the call, to dwell in thee;  
Through this wide waste of worlds! this vista vast,  
All sanded o'er with suns, suns turn'd to night  
Before thy feeblest beam—look down—down—  
down,

On a poor breathing particle in dust,  
Or, lower, an immortal in his crimes:  
His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues too!  
Those smaller faults, half-converts to the right:  
Nor let me close these eyes, which never more  
May see the sun (though Night's descending scale  
Now weighs up Morn) unpitied and unblest'd!  
In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain;  
Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now;  
And, since all pain is terrible to man,  
Though transient, terrible, at thy good hour,  
Gently, ah, gently, lay me in my bed.  
My clay-cold bed! by Nature, now, so near;  
By Nature near, still nearer by disease!  
Till then be this an emblem of my grave;  
Let it outpreach the preacher; every night  
Let it outcry the boy at Philip's ear,  
That tongue of death! that herald of the tomb!  
And when (the shelter of thy wing implor'd)  
My senses, sooth'd, shall sink in soft repose,  
O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,  
Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by Fate,

First in Fate's volume, at the page of Man—  
“ Man's sickly soul, though turn'd and toss'd for  
ever

From side to side, can rest on nought but thee;  
Here in full trust, hereafter in full joy:”  
On thee, the promis'd, sure, eternal down  
Of spirits, toil'd in travel through this vale:  
Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond;  
For—Love almighty! Love almighty! (sing,  
Exult, Creation!) Love almighty reigns!  
That death of death! that cordial of despair!  
And loud Eternity's triumphant song!

‘ Of whom no more:—for, O thou Patron-God!  
Thou God and mortal! thence more God to man!  
Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!  
Thou canst not 'scape uninjur'd from our praise:  
Uninjur'd from our praise can he escape  
Who, disembosom'd from the Father, bows  
The Heaven of Heavens to kiss the distant earth!  
Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul!  
Against the cross Death's iron sceptre breaks!  
From famish'd Ruin plucks her human prey!  
Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes!  
Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,  
Deputes their suffering brothers to receive!  
And if deep human guilt in payment fails,  
As deeper guilt prohibits our despair!  
Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice!  
And (to close all) omnipotently kind,  
Takes his delights among the sons of men \*?’

\* Prov. chap. viii. 31.

What words are these—and did they come from  
Heaven?

And were they spoke to man? to guilty man?  
What are all mysteries to love like this?  
The song of angels, all the melodies  
Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound;  
Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,  
Though plung'd, before, in horrors dark as night:  
Rich prelibation of consummate joy!  
Nor wait we dissolution to be bless'd.

This final effort of the moral Muse,  
How justly titled\*! nor for me alone;  
For all that read. What spirit of support,  
What heights of Consolation, crown my song?

Then farewell Night! of darkness, now, no more;  
Joy breaks, shines, triumphs; 'tis eternal day!  
Shall that which rises out of nought complain  
Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?  
My soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join  
The two supports of human happiness,  
Which some, erroneous, think can never meet,  
True taste of life, and constant thought of death!  
The thought of death, sole victor of its dread!  
Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill;  
Thy patron HE, whose diadem has dropp'd  
Yon gems of Heaven, eternity thy prize;  
And leave the racers of the world their own,  
Their feather and their froth, for endless toils:  
They part with all for that which is not bread;  
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power,

\* The Consolation.



And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.  
How must a spirit, late escap'd from earth,  
Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,  
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,  
Look back, astonish'd on the ways of men,  
Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!  
And when our present privilege is past,  
To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,  
The same astonishment will seize us all.  
What then must pain us would preserve us now.  
Lorenzo! 'tis not yet too late. Lorenzo!  
Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise;  
That is, seize Wisdom ere she seizes thee.  
For what, my small philosopher! is hell?  
'Tis nothing but full knowledge of the truth,  
When Truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,  
And calls Eternity to do her right.

Thus darkness aiding intellectual light,  
And sacred Silence whispering truths divine,  
And truths divine converting pain to peace,  
My song the midnight raven has outwing'd,  
And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes,  
Beyond the flaming limits of the world  
Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight  
Of Fancy, when our hearts remain below?  
Virtue abounds in flatterers and foes;  
'Tis pride to praise her, penance to perform.  
To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,  
Lorenzo! rise, at this auspicious hour,  
An hour when Heaven's most intimate with man;  
When, like a falling star, the ray divine  
Glides swift into the bosom of the just;

And just are all determin'd to reclaim,  
Which sets that title high, within thy reach.  
Awake, then; thy Philander calls: awake!  
Thou, who shalt wake when the Creation sleeps;  
When, like a taper, all these suns expire;  
When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,  
Plucking the pillars that support the world,  
In Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd,  
And midnight, universal midnight! reigns.

END OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS.

A  
**PARAPHRASE**

ON PART OF THE  
*BOOK OF JOB*.\*

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TO THE  
*RIGHT HON. THOMAS LORD PARKER,*  
BARON OF MACCLESFIELD, LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF GREAT BRITAIN, &c.

---

MY LORD,

**T**HOUGH I have not the honour of being known to your lordship, I presume to take a privilege which men of retirement are apt to think themselves in possession of, as being the only method they have of making their way to persons of your lordship's high station without struggling through multitudes for access. I may possibly fail in my respect to your lordship, even while I endeavour

\* It is disputed, among the critics, who was the author of the book of Job: some give it to Moses, some to others. As I was engaged in this little performance, some arguments occurred to me which favour the former of these opinions; which arguments I have flung into the following Notes, where little else is to be expected.

to show it most; but, if I err, it is because I imagined I ought not to make my first approach to one of your lordship's exalted character with less ceremony than that of a dedication. It is annexed to the condition of eminent merit, not to suffer more from the malice of its enemies, than from the importunity of its admirers; and perhaps it would be unjust, that your lordship should hope to be exempted from the troubles, when you possess all the talents of a patron.

I have here a fair occasion to celebrate those sublime qualities, of which a whole nation is sensible, were it not inconsistent with the design of my present application. By the just discharge of your great employments, your lordship may well deserve the prayers of the distressed, the thanks of your country, and the approbation of your royal master: this, indeed, is a reason why every good Briton should applaud your lordship, but it is equally a reason why none should disturb you, in the execution of your important affairs, by works of fancy and amusement. I was therefore induced to make this address to your lordship, by considering you rather in the amiable light of a person distinguished for a refined taste of the polite arts, and the candour that usually attends it, than in the dignity of your public character.

The greatness and solemnity of the subjects treated of in the following work, cannot fail in some measure to recommend it to a person who holds in the utmost veneration those sacred books from which it is taken; and would at the same time justify to the world my choice of the great name prefixed to it, could I be assured that the undertaking had not suffered in my hands. Thus much I think myself obliged to say, that if this little performance had not been very indulgently spoken of by some whose judgment is universally allowed in writings of this nature, I had not dared to gratify my ambition in offering it to your lordship. I am sensible that I am endeavouring to excuse one vanity by another; but I hope I shall meet with pardon for it, since it is visibly intended to show the great submission and respect with which I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

And most humble servant,

EDWARD YOUNG.



## A PARAPHRASE,

&c.

---

**T**HREE happy Job\* long liv'd in regal state,  
Nor saw the sumptuous East a prince so great;  
Whose worldly stores in such abundance flow'd,  
Whose heart with such exalted virtue glow'd.

\* The Almighty's speech, chap. xxxviii. &c. which is what I paraphrase in this little work, is by much the finest part of the noblest and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper. In order to set this distinguished part of the poem in a fuller light, and give the reader a clearer conception of it, I have abridged the preceding and subsequent parts of the poem, and joined them to it; so that this piece is a sort of an epitome of the whole book of Job.

I use the word *paraphrase*, because I want another which might better answer to the uncommon liberties I have taken. I have omitted, added, and transposed. The mountain, the comet, the sun, and other parts, are entirely added: those upon the peacock, the lion, &c. are much enlarged; and I have thrown the whole into a method more suitable to our notions of regularity. The judicious, if they compare this piece with the original, will, I flatter myself, find the reasons for the great liberties I have indulged myself in through the whole.

Longinus has a chapter on Interrogations, which shows that they contribute much to the sublime. This speech of the Almighty is made up of them. Interrogation seems, indeed, the proper style of majesty incensed. It differs from other manner of reproof, as bidding a person execute himself does from a common execution; for he that asks the guilty a proper question, makes him, in effect, pass sentence on himself.

At length misfortunes take their turn to reign,  
And ills on ills succeed, a dreadful train!  
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,  
The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,  
And spotted plagues, that mark'd his limbs all o'er  
So thick with pains, they wanted room for more?  
A change so sad what mortal heart could bear?  
Exhausted woe had left him nought to fear,  
But gave him all to grief. Low earth he press'd,  
Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.  
His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd,  
Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd;  
In anguish of their hearts their mantles rent,  
And seven long days in solemn silence spent;  
A debt of reverence to distress so great!  
Then Job contain'd no more, but curs'd his fate.  
His day of birth, its inauspicious light,  
He wishes sunk in shades of endless night,  
And blotted from the year; nor fears to crave  
Death, instant death, impatient for the grave,  
That seat of peace, that mansion of repose,  
Where rest and mortals are no longer foes;  
Where counsellors are hush'd, and mighty kings  
(O happy turn!) no more are wretched things.

His words were daring, and displeas'd his  
friends;

His conduct they reprove, and he defends;  
And now they kindled into warm debate,  
And sentiments oppos'd with equal heat:  
Fix'd in opinion, both refuse to yield,  
And summon all their reason to the field:  
So high, at length, their arguments were wrought,  
They reach'd the last extent of human thought:



A pause ensued:—when, lo! Heaven interpos'd,  
And awfully the long contention clos'd.  
Full o'er their heads, with terrible surprise,  
A sudden whirlwind blacken'd all the skies:  
(They saw and trembled!) from the darkness  
broke

A dreadful voice, and thus the' Almighty spoke\*.

‘ Who gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain,  
Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign;  
Lifts up his thought against me from the dust,  
And tells the world's Creator what is just?  
Of late so brave, now lift a dauntless eye,  
Face my demand, and give it a reply.  
Where didst thou dwell at Nature's early birth?  
Who laid foundations for the spacious earth?  
Who on its surface did extend the line,  
Its form determine, and its bulk confine?  
Who fix'd the corner-stone? what hand, declare,  
Hung it on nought, and fasten'd it in air,  
When the bright morning stars in concert sung,  
When Heaven's high arch with loud hosannas rung,  
When shouting sons of God the triumph crown'd,  
And the wide concave thunder'd with the sound?

\* The book of Job is well known to be dramatic; and, like the tragedies of Old Greece, is fiction built on truth. Probably this most noble part of it, the Almighty speaking out of the whirlwind (so suitable to the after practice of the Greek stage, when there happened *dignus vindice nodus*) is fictitious; but it is a fiction more agreeable to the time in which Job lived than to any since. Frequent before the law were the appearances of the Almighty after this manner, *Exod.* ch. xix. *Ezek.* ch. i. &c. Hence is he said to *dwell in thick darkness: and have his way in the whirlwind.*

Earth's numerous kingdoms, hast thou view'd them  
all?

And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball?  
Who heav'd the mountain which sublimely stands,  
And casts its shadow into distant lands?

‘ Who, stretching forth his sceptre o’er the deep,  
Can that wild world in due subjection keep?  
I broke the globe, I scoop’d its hollow’d side,  
And did a bason for the floods provide:  
I chain’d them with my word; the boiling sea,  
Work’d up in tempests, hears my great decree:  
“ Thus far thy floating tide shall be convey’d;  
And here, O main! be thy proud billows stay’d\*.”

‘ Hast thou explor’d the secrets of the deep,  
Where, shut from use, unnumber’d treasures sleep?  
Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,  
Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea?  
Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e’er tread,  
Whole worlds of waters rolling o’er thy head?

‘ Hath the cleft centre open’d wide to thee?  
Death’s inmost chambers didst thou ever see?  
E’er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade  
To the black portal through the’ incumbent shade?

\* There is a very great air in all that precedes, but this is signally sublime. We are struck with admiration to see the vast and ungovernable ocean receiving commands, and punctually obeying them; to find it like a managed horse, raging, tossing, and foaming, but by the rule and direction of its master. This passage yields in sublimity to that of *Let there be light, &c.* so much only, as the absolute government of Nature yields to the creation of it.

The like spirit in these two passages is no bad concurrent argument that Moses is author of the book of Job.

Deep are those shades; but shades still deeper  
hide

My counsels from the ken of human pride.

‘Where dwells the Light? in what refulgent  
dome?

And where has darkness made her dismal home?  
Thou know’st, no doubt, since thy large heart is  
fraught

With ripen’d wisdom through long ages brought,  
Since Nature was call’d forth when thou wast by,  
And into being rose beneath thine eye!

‘Are mists begotten? who their father knew?  
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew?  
To bind the stream by night what hand can boast?  
Or whiten morning with the hoary frost?  
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions  
blown,

Touches the sea, and turns it into stone?  
A sudden desert spreads o’er realms defac’d,  
And lays one half of the creation waste?

‘Thou know’st me not; thy blindness cannot see  
How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.  
Canst thou in whirlwinds mount aloft? canst thou  
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow?  
And, when day triumphs in meridian light,  
Put forth thy hand, and shade the world with night?

‘Who launch’d the clouds in air, and bid them roll  
Suspended seas aloft, from pole to pole?  
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain,  
And quench the summer with a waste of rain?  
Who in rough deserts, far from human toil,  
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile?

There blooms the rose where human face ne'er  
shone,

And spreads its beauties to the sun alone.

‘To check the show’r who lifts his hand on high,  
And shuts the sluices of the’ exhausted sky,  
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,  
Her naked mountains and her russet plains,  
But, new in life, a cheerful prospect yields  
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields;  
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,  
And earth and Heaven are fill’d with rich perfume?

‘Hast thou e’er scal’d my wintry skies, and seen  
Of hail and snows my northern magazine?  
These the dread treasures of mine anger are,  
My funds of vengeance for the day of war,  
When clouds rain death and storms, at my command,

Rage through the world, or waste a guilty land.

‘Who taught the rapid winds to fly so fast,  
Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast?  
Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour?  
Who strikes through Nature with the solemn roar  
Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,  
And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball?—  
Not he who trembles at the darted fires,  
Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.

‘Who drew the comet out to such a size,  
And pour’d his flaming train o’er half the skies?  
Did thy resentment hang him out? Does he  
Glare on the nations, and denounce from thee?

‘Who on low earth can moderate the rein  
That guides the stars along the’ ethereal plain?

Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,  
Their lustre brighten, and supply their force?  
Canst thou the skies' benevolence restrain,  
And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain?  
Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,  
Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year?  
Bid Mazzaroth his destin'd station know,  
And teach the bright Arcturus where to glow?  
Mine is the Night, with all her stars; I pour  
Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store.

‘Dost thou pronounce where Day-light shall  
    be born,  
And draw the purple curtain of the Morn?  
Awake the Sun, and bid him come away,  
And glad thy world with his obsequious ray?  
Hast thou, enthron'd in flaming glory, driv'n  
Triumphant round the spacious ring of Heav'n?  
That pomp of light, what hand so far displays,  
That distant earth lies basking in the blaze?

‘Who did the Soul with her rich powers invest,  
And light up reason in the human breast,  
To shine, with fresh increase of lustre, bright,  
When stars and sun are set in endless night?  
To these my various questions make reply:—  
The' Almighty spoke, and, speaking, shook the sky.

What then, Chaldean Sire! was thy surprise?  
Thus thou, with trembling heart, and downcast  
    eyes:

‘Once and again, which I in groans deplore,  
My tongue has err'd, but shall presume no more.  
My voice is in eternal silence bound,  
And all my soul falls prostrate to the ground.’

He ceas'd: when, lo! again the' Almighty spoke;  
The same dread voice from the black whirlwind  
broke.

' Can that arm measure with an arm divine?  
And canst thou thunder with a voice like mine?  
Or in the hollow of thy hand contain  
The bulk of waters, the wide-spreading main,  
When, mad with tempests, all the billows rise  
In all their rage, and dash the distant skies?

' Come forth, in Beauty's excellence array'd,  
And be the grandeur of thy pow'r display'd;  
Put on omnipotence, and, frowning, make  
The spacious round of the creation shake;  
Dispatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow  
Triumphant Vice, lay lofty tyrants low,  
And crumble them to dust. When this is done,  
I grant thy safety lodg'd in thee alone;  
Of thee thou art, and may'st undaunted stand  
Behind the buckler of thine own right hand.

' Fond Man! the vision of a moment made!  
Dream of a dream! and shadow of a shade!  
What worlds hast thou produc'd, what creatures  
fram'd,  
What insects cherish'd, that thy God is blam'd?  
When, pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood  
Loud calls on God\*, importunate for food;

\* Another argument that Moses was the author is, that most of the creatures here mentioned are Egyptian. The reason given why the raven is particularly mentioned as an object of the care of Providence is, because by her clamorous and importunate voice she particularly seems always calling upon it; thence *νοτάσσω α κβγαξ*, *Ælian*, lib. ii. c. 48. is to ask earnestly.

Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,  
 And stills the clamour of the craving nest?  
 ‘ Who in the stupid ostrich\* has subdu’d  
 A parent’s care, and fond inquietude?  
 While far she flies, her scatter’d eggs are found,  
 Without an owner, on the sandy ground;  
 Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,  
 And borrow life from an indulgent sky;  
 Adopted by the Sun, in blaze of day,  
 They ripen under his prolific ray;  
 Unmindful she that some unhappy tread  
 May crush her young in their neglected bed:

And since there were ravens on the banks of the Nile more clamorous than the rest of that species, those probably are meant in this place.

\* There are many instances of this bird’s stupidity: let two suffice. First, It covers its head in the reeds, and thinks itself all out of sight.

Stat lumine clauso  
 Ridendum revoluta caput, creditque latere  
 Quæ non ipsa videt.

CLAUD.

Secondly, They that go in pursuit of them, draw the skin of an ostrich’s neck on one hand, which proves a sufficient lure to take them with the other.

They have so little brain, that Heliogabalus had six hundred heads for his supper.

Here we may observe that our judicious as well as sublime author just touches the great points of distinction in each creature, and then hastens to another. A description is exact when you cannot add, but what is common to another thing; nor withdraw, but something peculiarly belonging to the thing described. A likeness is lost in too much description, as a meaning often in too much illustration.

What time she skims along the field with speed\*,  
She scorns the rider, and pursuing steed†.

‘ How rich the peacock‡! what bright glories  
run

From plume to plume, and vary in the sun!  
He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,  
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day;  
With conscious state the spacious round displays,  
And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.

‘ Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,  
Perpetual summer, and a change of skies?  
When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind,  
Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind;  
The sun returning, she returns again,  
Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.

\* Here is marked another peculiar quality of this creature, which neither flies nor runs directly, but has a motion composed of both, and, using its wings as sails, makes great speed.

Vasta velut Lybiæ venantium vocibus ales  
Cum premitur, calidas cursu transmittit arenas,  
Inque modum veli sinuatis flamine pennis  
Pulverulenta volat—— CLAUD. in Eutr.

† Xenophon says, Cyrus had horses that could overtake the goat and the wild ass, but none that could reach this creature. A thousand golden ducats, or an hundred camels, was the stated price of a horse that could equal their speed.

‡ Though this bird is but just mentioned in my author, I could not forbear going a little farther, and spreading those beautiful plumes (which are there shut up) into half a dozen lines. The circumstance I have marked of his opening his plumes to the sun is true: *Expandit colores adverso maxime sole, quia sic fulgentius radiant.* Plin. lx. c. 20.



‘ Though strong the hawk, though practis’d well  
to fly\*,

An eagle drops her in a lower sky;  
An eagle, when, deserting human sight,  
She seeks the sun in her unwearied flight:  
Did thy command her yellow pinion lift  
So high in air, and seat her on the clift,  
Where far above thy world she dwells alone,  
And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own;  
Thence wide o’er Nature takes her dread survey,  
And with a glance predestinates her prey†?  
She feasts her young with blood, and, hovering o’er  
The’ unslaughter’d host, enjoys the promis’d gore.

‘ Know’st thou how many moons, by me assign’d,  
Roll o’er the mountain goat, and forest hind‡,

\* Thuanus (*De re Accip.*) mentions a hawk that flew from Paris to London in a night.

And the Egyptians, in regard to its swiftness, made it their symbol for the wind; for which reason we may suppose the hawk, as well as the crow above, to have been a bird of note in Egypt.

† The eagle is said to be of so acute a sight, that when she is so high in air that man cannot see her, she can discern the smallest fish under water. My author accurately understood the nature of the creatures he describes, and seems to have been a naturalist as well as a poet, which the next note will confirm.

‡ The meaning of this question is, Knowest thou the time and circumstances of their bringing forth? for to know the time only was easy, and had nothing extraordinary in it; but the circumstances had something peculiarly expressive of God’s providence, which makes the question proper in this place. Pliny observes, that the hind with young is by instinct directed to a certain herb called *Seselis*, which facilitates the birth. Thunder

While, pregnant, they a mother's load sustain?  
They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.  
Hale are their young, from human frailties freed,  
Walk unsustain'd, and unassisted feed;  
They live at once, forsake the dam's warm side,  
Take the wide world, with Nature for their guide;  
Bound o'er the lawn, or seek the distant glade,  
And find a home in each delightful shade.

‘ Will the tall reem, which knows no lord but  
me,

Low at the crib, and ask an alms of thee?  
Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,  
Break the stiff clod, and o'er thy furrow smoke?  
Since great his strength, go trust him, void of care,  
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year;  
Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,  
And cast his load among thy gather'd stores.

‘ Didst thou from service the wild ass discharge,  
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large;  
Through the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,  
And lose himself in his unbounded home?  
By Nature's hand magnificently fed,  
His meal is on the range of mountains spread;  
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,  
He sees in distant smoke the city throng;  
Conscious of freedom, scorns the smother'd train,  
The threatening driver, and the servile rein.

‘ Survey the warlike horse! didst thou invest  
With thunder his robust distended chest?

also (which looks like the more immediate hand of Providence)  
has the same effect, *Ps.* xxix. In so early an age to observe  
these things may style our author a Naturalist.

No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays;  
'Tis dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze:  
To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,  
And triumphs in the fulness of his might:  
High-rais'd, he snuffs the battle from afar,  
And burns to plunge amid the raging war;  
And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,  
And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.  
How does his firm, his rising heart, advance  
Full on the brandish'd sword and shaken lance,  
While his fix'd eyeballs meet the dazzling shield,  
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field!  
He sinks the sense of pain in generous pride,  
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side;  
But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast  
Till death, and when he groans, he groans his last.

‘ But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,  
Grimly majestic in his lonely walks;  
When round he glares, all living creatures fly;  
He clears the desert with his rolling eye.  
Say, mortal! does he rouse at thy command,  
And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand?  
Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,  
And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,  
Where bent on death lie hid his tawny brood,  
And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood;  
Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,  
In darkness wrapt, and slumber o'er their prey?  
By the pale moon they take their destin'd round\*,  
And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground.

\* Pursuing their prey by night is true of most wild beasts, particularly the lion, *Psal.* civ. 20. The Arabians have one

Now shrieks and dying groans the desert fill;  
They rage, they rend; their ravenous jaws distil  
With crimson foam; and when the banquet's o'er,  
They stride away, and paint their steps with gore:  
In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,  
And shudders at the talon in the dust.

‘ Mild is my behemoth, though large his frame;  
Smooth is his temper, and repress'd his flame,  
While unprovok'd. This native of the flood  
Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food;  
Earth sinks beneath him as he moves along  
To seek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.  
See, with what strength his harden'd loins are bound,  
All over proof, and shut against a wound!  
How like a mountain-cedar moves his tail!  
Nor can his complicated sinews fail.  
Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass  
The bars of steel; his ribs are ribs of brass;  
His port majestic, and his armed jaw,  
Give the wide forest and the mountain law.  
The mountains feed him; there the beasts admire  
The mighty stranger, and in dread retire;  
At length his greatness nearer they survey,  
Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.  
The fens and marshes are his cool retreat,  
His noontide shelter from the burning heat;  
Their sedgy bosoms his wide couch are made,  
And groves of willows give him all their shade.  
His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fir'd with drought,  
He trusts to turn its current down his throat;  
among their five hundred names for the lion, which signifies  
*the hunter by moon-shine.*

In lessen'd waves it creeps along the plain;  
He sinks a river\*, and he thirsts again.

‘ Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,  
Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide;  
With slender hair leviathan† command,  
And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.  
Will he become thy servant? will he own  
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown?  
Or with his sport amuse thy leisure day,  
And, bound in silk, with thy soft maidens play?

‘ Shall pompous banquets swell with such a  
prize?

And the bowl journey round his ample size?  
Or the debating merchants share the prey,  
And various limbs to various marts convey?  
Through his firm skull what steel its way can win?  
What forceful engine can subdue his skin?  
Fly far, and live; tempt not his matchless might;  
The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight;

\* Cephesi glaciale caput quo suetus anhelam  
Ferre sitim Python, amnemque avertere ponto.

STAT. Theb. v. 349.

Qui spiris tegeret montes, hauriret hiatu  
Flumina, &c.

CLAUD. Pref. in Ruf.

Let not, then, this hyperbole seem too much for an Eastern poet, though some commentators of name strain hard, in this place, for a new construction, through fear of it.

† The taking the crocodile is most difficult. Diodorus says, they are not to be taken but by iron nets. When Augustus conquered Egypt, he struck a medal, the impress of which was a crocodile chained to a palm-tree, with this inscription, *Nemo antea religavit.*

The rashest dare not rouse him up\*: who then  
Shall turn on me, among the sons of men?

‘ Am I a debtor? hast thou ever heard  
Whence come the gifts which are on me conferr’d?  
My lavish fruit a thousand vallies fills,  
And mine the herds that graze a thousand hills:  
Earth, sea, and air, all Nature is my own,  
And stars and sun are dust beneath my throne;  
And dar’st thou with the world’s great Father vie,  
Thou, who dost tremble at my creature’s eye?

‘ At full my huge leviathan shall rise,  
Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous size:  
Who, great in arms, e’er stripp’d his shining mail,  
Or crown’d his triumph with a single scale?  
Whose heart sustains him to draw near? Behold  
Destruction yawns†; his spacious jaws unfold,  
And, marshall’d round the wide expanse, disclose  
Teeth edg’d with death, and crowding rows on rows:  
What hideous fangs on either side arise!  
And what a deep abyss between them lies!  
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet sound,  
The one how long, the other how profound!  
His bulk is charg’d with such a furious soul,  
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll

\* This alludes to a custom of this creature, which is, when  
sated with fish to come ashore and sleep among the reeds.

† The crocodile’s mouth is exceeding wide. When he gapes,  
says Pliny, *fit totum os*. Martial says to his old woman,

Cum comparata rictibus tuis ora  
Niliacus habet crocodilus angusta.

So that the expression there is barely just.

As from a furnace; and, when rous'd his ire,  
 Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire\*.  
 The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas,  
 Thy terror, this thy great superior please;  
 Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state;  
 His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete;  
 His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part;  
 As steel his nerves, as adamant his heart.  
 When, late awak'd, he rears him from the floods,  
 And, stretching forth his stature to the clouds,  
 Writhes in the sun aloft his scaly height,  
 And strikes the distant hills with transient light,  
 Far round are fatal damps of terror spread,  
 The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.  
 Large is his front; and when his burnish'd eyes  
 Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise†.

\* This, too, is nearer truth than at first view may be imagined. The crocodile, say the naturalists, lying long under water, and being there forced to hold its breath, when it emerges, the breath long repressed is hot, and bursts out so violently, that it resembles fire and smoke. The horse suppresses not his breath by any means so long, neither is he so fierce and animated; yet the most correct of poets ventures to use the same metaphor concerning him.

Collectumque *premens* volvit sub naribus *ignem*.

By this and the foregoing note, I would caution against a false opinion of the Eastern boldness, from passages in them ill understood.

† *His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning*. I think this gives us as great an image of the thing it would express as can enter the thought of man. It is not improbable that the Egyptians stole their hieroglyphic for the morning, which is the crocodile's eye, from this passage, though no commentator, I have seen, mentions it. It is easy to conceive how the Egyptians

In vain may death in various shapes invade,  
The swift-wing'd arrow, the descending blade;  
His naked breast their impotence defies;  
The dart rebounds, the brittle falchion flies.  
Shut in himself, the war without he hears,  
Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears;  
The cumber'd strand their wasted vollies strow;  
His sport the rage and labour of the foe.  
His pastimes like a caldron boil the flood,  
And blacken ocean with the rising mud;  
The billows feel him as he works his way,  
His hoary footsteps shine along the sea;  
The foam high-wrought, with white divides the  
    green,  
And distant sailors point where death has been.  
His like earth bears not on her spacious face;  
Alone in nature stands his dauntless race,

should be both readers and admirers of the writings of Moses, whom I suppose the author of this poem.

I have observed already that three or four of the creatures here described are Egyptian; the two last are notoriously so; they are the river-horse and the crocodile, those celebrated inhabitants of the Nile; and on these two it is that our author chiefly dwells. It would have been expected from an author more remote from that river than Moses, in a catalogue of creatures produced to magnify their Creator, to have dwelt on the two largest works of his hand, *viz.* the elephant and the whale. This is so natural an expectation, that some commentators have rendered behemoth and leviathan, the elephant and whale, though the descriptions in our author will not admit of it; but Moses being, as we may well suppose, under an immediate terror of the hippopotamos and crocodile, from their daily mischiefs and ravages around him, it is very accountable why he should permit them to take place.



For utter ignorance of fear renown'd:  
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around;  
Makes every swoln disdainful heart subside,  
And holds dominion o'er the sons of Pride.'

Then the Chaldean eas'd his labouring breast,  
With full conviction of his crime oppress'd.

'Thou canst accomplish all things, Lord of might!  
And every thought is naked to thy sight:  
But, oh! thy ways are wonderful, and lie  
Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.  
Oft have I heard of thine Almighty pow'r,  
But never saw thee till this dreadful hour.  
O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of life I see,  
Abhor myself, and give my soul to thee:  
Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more:  
Man is not made to question, but adore.'

FINIS.